



PEECHES AND ESSAYS

BY

PROF. JOHN WILSON, REV. DR. WALLACE,
GEN. JAS. A. GARFIELD, HON. S. S. COX,
HON. W. P. FRYE, HON. J. PROCTOR KNOTT,
MR. ANDREW CARNEGIE,
LORD ROSEBERY, HON. E. R. HOAR,
RALPH WALDO EMERSON,
HON. GEO. F. HOAR, U. S. SENATE, W. R. SMITH,
HON. DAVID B. HENDERSON, SPEAKER, HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES,
DR. MACLEOD,

WITH

POEMS ON BURNS,

BY

MONTGOMERY, HALLECK AND CAMPBELL,
MRS. WM. R. SMITH, AND OTHERS.

2d Edition—Enlarged. Published under the auspices
of the Jean Armour Burns Club.

GIBSON BROTHERS, PRINTERS,
1902.



JEAN ARMOUR,
ROBERT BURNS' WIFE.

SPEECHES AND ESSAYS

BY

PROF. JOHN WILSON, REV. DR. WALLACE,
GEN. JAS. A. GARFIELD, HON. S. S. COX,
HON. W. P. FRYE, HON. J. PROCTOR KNOTT,
MR. ANDREW CARNEGIE,
LORD ROSEBERRY, HON. E. R. HOAR,
RALPH WALDO EMERSON,
HON. GEO. F. HOAR, U. S. SENATE, W. R. SMITH,
HON. DAVID B. HENDERSON, SPEAKER, HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES,
DR. MACLEOD,

WITH

POEMS ON BURNS,

BY

MONTGOMERY, HALLECK AND CAMPBELL,
MRS. WM. R. SMITH, AND OTHERS.

2d Edition—Enlarged. Published under the auspices
of the Jean Armour Burns Club.

GIBSON BROTHERS, PRINTERS,
1902.

P14317
W4
1962

This booklet is published for the purpose of helping people to think aright about Robert Burns.

At a meeting of the BURNS CLUB OF WASHINGTON, April 10, 1876, a committee was directed to publish in book form, as a contribution to BURNS literature, the speech of JOHN WILSON, delivered to 70,000 people congregated on the banks of the Doon, on the return of BURNS' son from India, in 1844, which had never been published in this country; the great oration of Dr. WALLACE, delivered in Edinburgh, on BURNS' birth-day, 1872; together with the speeches delivered and letters read before the Club on various anniversary occasions by the following distinguished statesmen and orators: Gen. JAS. A. GARFIELD, Hon. J. G. BLAINE, Prof. JAMES MONROE, Hon. S. S. COX, Hon. W. P. FRYE, Hon. J. PROCTOR KNOTT, and others.

In this Second Edition we add the essay of Mr. Andrew Carnegie, the speeches of Lord Rosebery, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Hon. George F. Hoar, Wm. R. Smith, Hon. David B. Henderson, and Dr. MacLeod, and letter of Hon. E. R. Hoar, and sundry interesting poems.

The names of the above well-known orators, statesmen, and essayists are a sufficient guarantee that the contents of this little volume will make an excellent addenda to every edition of the poet's works.

The keen analysis of J. PROCTOR KNOTT, the natural eloquence of W. P. FRYE, the witticisms of S. S. COX, the scholarly parallels of JAS. A. GARFIELD, and the remarks of other distinguished gentlemen who have spoken for BURNS at the National Capital, are worthy of America. The progressive religious thought in the oration of the Rev. Dr. WALLACE is inimitable in its way, and well worthy a place in connection with the masterly speech of glorious old CHRISTOPHER NORTH.

As a prelude we give the poem of JAMES MONTGOMERY:

ROBERT BURNS.

WHAT bird in beauty, flight, or song,
Can with the bard compare,
Who sang as sweet, and soar'd as strong
As ever child of air?

His plume, his note, his form, could
BURNS
For whim or pleasure change:
He was not one, but all by turns,
With transmigration strange.

The Blackbird, oracle of spring,
When flower'd his moral lay;
The Swallow, wheeling on the wing,
Capriciously at play.

The Humming-bird, from bloom to bloom,
Inhaling heavenly balm;
The Raven, in the tempest's gloom;
The Halcyon in the calm.

In "auld Kirk Alloway," the Owl,
At witching time of night;
By "bonnie Doon," the earliest Fowl
That carroll'd to the light.

He was the Wren amidst the grove,
When in his homely vein;

At Bannockburn the Bird of Jove,
With thunder in his train.

The Woodlark, in his mournful hours;
The Goldfinch, in his mirth;
The Thrush, a spendthrift of his power,
Enrapturing heaven and earth.

The Swan, in majesty and grace,
Contemplative and still;
But roused,—no Falcon, in the chase,
Could like his satire kill.

The Linnet in simplicity,
In tenderness the Dove;
But more than all besides was he,
The Nightingale in love.

Oh! had he never stooped to shame,
Nor lent a charm to vice,
How had devotion loved to name
That Bird of Paradise!

Peace to the dead!—In Scotia's choir
Of Minstrels great and small,
He sprang from his spontaneous fire,
The Phoenix of them all.

Get
Non H O Lodge
USS

Jan. 14, '06

364 4 F13

Speeches on Burns.

A GRAND demonstration in honor of the genius of ROBERT BURNS was suggested to the people of Scotland by the arrival from India of Col. WILLIAM BURNS, the poet's second son. August 6, 1844, was selected as a national holiday in Scotland. The great festival was presided over by the Earl of Eglinton, supported by hundreds of the nobility and men of letters, whose names filled columns of the public journals of that time. We select from the able speeches made on the occasion that of Prof. JOHN WILSON, of *Blackwood's Magazine* :

Were this festival to commemorate the genius of Burns, and it were asked what need is there of such commemoration, since his fame is co-extensive with the literature of our land, and inherent in every soul, I would answer that though admiration of the poet be indeed unbounded as the world, yet we, as compatriots to whom it is more especially dear, rejoice to see that universal sentiment concentrated in the voice of a great assembly of his own people—that we rejoice to meet in thousands to honor him who has delighted each single one of us all at his own hearth. But this commemoration expresses, too, if not a profounder, yet a more tender sentiment; for it is to welcome his sons to the land which their father illustrated—to indulge our national pride in a great name, while, at the same time, we gratify in full breasts the most pious of affections. It was customary, you know, in former times, to crown great poets. No such oblation honored our bard; yet he, too, tasted of human applause—he enjoyed its delights, and he knew the trials that attend it. Which, think you, would he have preferred? Such a celebration as this in his lifetime, or fifty years after his death? I cannot doubt that he would have preferred the posthumous, because the finer incense. The honor and its object are thus seen in their just proportions; for death gives an elevation which the candid soul of the poet would have considered, and that honor he would have reserved rather for his *manes* than encountered it

with his living infirmities. And yet, could he have foreseen the day when they for whom his soul was often sorely troubled, should, after many years of separation, return to the cot where himself was born, and near it, within the shadow of his own monument, be welcomed for his sake by the lords and ladies of the land—and dearer still, far dearer to his manly breast, by the children and the children's children of people of his own degree, whose hearts he sought to thrill by the voice of his own inspirations—then surely would such a vision have been sweeter to his soul even than that immortal one in which the genius of the land bound holly round his forehead—the lyric-wreathed crown that shall flourish forever. Of his three sons now sitting here, one only, I believe, can remember his father's face—can remember those large, lustrous eyes of his, so full of meaning, whether darkened by thought, melting in melancholy, or kindling in mirth—but never turned on his children, nor the mother of his children, but with one expression of tenderest, most intense affection. Even at this day, he, too, may remember his father's head with its dark clusters, not unmixed with gray, and those eyes closed forever, lying upon the bed of death; nor, should such solemn image arise, would it be unsuitable to this festival; for while I bid welcome to the sons of Burns to their father's land, I feel, I cannot but feel, that while you have conferred upon me a high honor, you have also imposed upon me a sacred duty; and however inadequately I may discharge it, at least I shall in no degree violate either the spirit of humanity or truth. In speaking of the character of Burns, in the presence of his sons, I must speak reverently; but even in their presence I must not refuse to speak the truth. I must speak according to the established and everlasting judgment of what is right. Burns had his faults. Burns, like every other mortal being, had his faults, great faults in the eyes of men, and grievous in the eyes of heaven above. There is a moral in every man's life, even in his humblest condition, imperfectly understood; and how affecting is it when we read confessions wrung out by remorse from the souls of the greatly gifted and the gloriously endowed. But it is not his faults that are remembered here—surely it is not to honor these that here we meet together. To deny that error is error is to extenuate its blame. We make an outrage upon sacred truth; but to forget that it exists, or if that may not be wholly, so to think of it as to regard it with that melancholy emotion that accompanies all our meditations on the mixed character of men, that is not only allowable, but it is ordered—it is a privilege dear to humanity. And well indeed might we tremble for him who should in this be dead to the voice of Nature crying from the tomb. And in this mark how graciously time aids the inclinations of charity. Its shadows soften what they may not hide; and the distant discords that might have grated too painfully on our

ears are now undistinguishably lost in that music, sweet and solemn, that comes afar with the sound of a great man's name. It is consolatory to see how the faults of those whom the people honor grow fainter and more faint in the national memory, while their virtues grow brighter and still more bright; and if in this injustice has been done them—and who shall dare to deny that cruellest injustice was once done to Burns—the succeeding generations become more and more charitable to the dead, and desire to repair the wrong by some profounder homage. It may be truly said “the good which men do lives after them.” All that is ethereal in their being alone seems to survive; and, therefore, all our cherished memories of our best men, and Burns was among our best, ought to be invested with all consistent excellencies; for far better do their virtues instruct us by the love which they inspire than ever could their vices admonish us. To dwell on the goodness of the great shows that we ourselves are not only lovers of nature, but that we may be aspiring to reach his serene abode; but to dwell upon the faults of greatness, and, still worse, to ransack, in order that we may create them, that is the low industry of envy, which grown into a habit, becomes malice, at once hardening and embittering to the mind. Such, in the case of our great poet, beyond all doubt was the source of many a malignant truth and lie, fondly written down, carefully recorded, by a class of calumniators that never may become extinct. And for many years we were forced to hear souls ignoble, formed to be forgot, dragging forth some puny phantasm of their own heated fancy, as if it were the majestic shade of Burns, evoked from his mausoleum for contumely and insult. We have thus been told, by some who rather presumptuously assume the office of our instructors, to beware how we allow our admiration of genius to seduce us from reverence of truth. We have been told how far moral is superior to intellectual worth; nay, that in nature they are not allied. But akin in nature they are, and grief and pity 'tis that they should ever be disunited. But mark in what a hateful, because hypocritical, spirit such counsels as these have often been preferred, till salutary truths have been perverted by gross misrepresentation into pernicious falsehoods. They did not seek to elevate nature; they sought to degrade genius. And never in any instance did such men stand forth so glaringly self-contradicted of wretched ignorance of the nature of both than by this wilful perversion of many of the noblest attributes of humanity in the character of Robert Burns. Yes; virtue and genius are both alike from heaven, and both alike tend heavenward. Therefore we lament to see a single stain assailing the divine gift of genius—therefore lament to see virtue, where no genius is, fall before the tempter. But let us never listen to those who, by the very breath of morning, would seek to blight the wreath bound

round the forehead of the Muse's son by a people's gratitude. Let us beware of those who, under affected zeal for religion, have as often violated the spirit of both by gross misrepresentations and exaggerations and denunciations of the common frailties of our nature in illustrious men—in men who, in spite of their aberrations, more or less deplorable, from the right line of duty, were, nevertheless, like Burns, in their prevailing moods, devoted worshippers of virtue in the general tenor of their lives, and noble examples to all of their brethren. Burns, who, while sorely oppressed in his own generous breast by the worst of anxieties—the anxiety of providing the means of subsistence to those of his own household and his own heart—was notwithstanding no less faithful to that sacred gift with which by heaven he had been endowed. Obedient to the holy inspiration, he ever sought it purely in the paths of poverty—to love which is indeed from heaven. From his inexhaustible fancy, warmed by the sunshine of his heart, even in the thickest gloom, he strewed along the weary ways of the world flowers so beautiful that even to eyes that weep—that are familiar with tears—they look as if they were flowers dropped from heaven. But in a more humane—in a more Christian—spirit, have men now consented to judge of the character of their great benefactor; therefore at an hazard I may call them sacred scenes, the anniversary of the birth or death of one who had completed so great an achievement. But they have still sought to make manifest the honor they intended him—to make manifest, if possible, in some degree the demands made upon them by the imagination and the heart. In what other way than that could genius ever have dared to seek to perpetuate in elegies and hymns expressive of a whole people's triumph, and a whole people's grief, for the death of some king, sage, priest, or poet? What king from the infirmities of his meanest subjects ever was free? We know that throbs come from a kingly heart up to the brow which is rounded by a kingly crown. Aye, kings have passions or ideas as fatal as those that torment the heart of the meanest kind on his pallet of straw. But then the king, with all his sins, had been a guardian, a restorer, a deliverer; thus his sins were buried with his body, and all over the land—not only in his day, but in after generations—the cry was “O king, live forever!” The sage has seen how liberty rests on law; how rights are obligations; how the passions of men must be controlled in order that they may be free. He, too, how often has he struggled in vain with his own passions; with the powers of evil that beset him in that seclusion in which reverend admiration would fondly believe that wisdom forever serenely dwells? The servant of God, has he always kept his heart pure from the earth, nor ever lifted up in prayer but spotless hands? The humbled confession of his own unworthiness would be his reply, alike to the

scoffer and to him that believed. But were there one afflicted by plague or pestilence, he had carried comfort into the house deserted by all, except by sin and despair—or he sailed away from the homes of Christian men, where he had lived long in peace, honor, and affluence, for the sake of his divine Master, and for the sake of them who were sitting in darkness and the shadow of death; therefore shall his name be blessed, and all Christendom point to him as a chosen servant of God. Now, it might seem that there is a deep descent from these benefactors of our race to those who have done other services to mankind by their powers of fancy and imagination, and by means of the created powers of God. It might so seem; but they, too, have been numbered among our best benefactors. Their graves have been visited by many a pious pilgrim from afar; and whether we think on the highest of them all, Milton, who sung things yet unattempted in prose or rhyme, and yet who was not free from the errors inseparable from the storms of civil war which then raged, even to the shedding of the blood of kings—down to England's beloved illustrious minstrel—Wordsworth—descending from height to height in the regions of song—we find that our love and gratitude is due to them as benefactors of our species. And among such benefactors who will deny that Burns is entitled to a place—who reconciled poverty to its lot, who lightened the burden of care, made toil charmed with its very task-work, and at the same time almost reconciled grief to the grave; who by one immortal song has sanctified forever the poor man's cot, and by a picture which genius alone, inspired by piety, could have conceived, a picture so tender and yet so true of that happy night, that it seems to pass, by some sweet transition, from the working world into that hallowed day of God's appointment and made to breathe a heavenly calm—a holy serenity? Now, I hold that such sentiments as these which I have expressed, if they be true, afford a justification at once of the character of Burns—his moral and intellectual character—that places him beyond the possibility of detraction, among the highest order of human beings who have benefited their race by the expressions of noble sentiment and glorious thoughts. I fear I am trespassing on your time too much, but I would fain keep your attention for a very short time longer, while I say that there is a voice heard above and below and round about—the voice of mere admiration, as it has been expressed by men of taste and criticism. There is a voice which those who listen to it can hear—a voice which has pronounced its judgment on the character of Burns—a judgment which cannot on earth be carried to a higher tribunal, and which never will be reversed. It was heard of old, and struck terror into the hearts of tyrants, who quaked and quailed and fled for fear from this land before the unconquered Caledonian spear. It is a voice they were pleased to hear; it was like the sound of

distant waterfalls, the murmurs of the summer woods, or the voice of the mighty sea which ever rolls even on. I mean the voice of the people of Scotland, of her peasantry and trades, of all who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow; the voice of the working men. I shall not pretend to draw their character; this I may say of them now, and boldly, that they do not choose to be dictated to as to the choice of those who with them shall be a household word. They are men from whose hands easier would it be to wrench the weapon than ever to wrench their worship from their hearts. They are men who loved truth, sincerity, integrity, resolution, and independence—an open front, and a bold eye, that fears not to look on the face of clay. They do not demand, in one and the same person, inconsistent virtues; they are no lovers of perfection or of perfectibility; they know that there are fainter and darker shadows in the character of every man; and they seem, as we look back on their history, to have loved most those who have been subject most within and without to strong and severe temptation. Whether in triumph or in valor, they have shown at least, by the complexion of character of their souls, that they loved their country, and had no other passion so strong as the defence of the people. Aye! they too, unless I am mistaken, loved those who had struggled with adversity. They loved those who have had their trials, their griefs, their sorrows; and, most of all, they loved those who were not ashamed of confessing that they were so, and who threw themselves on the common feelings and forgiveness here below, and trusted for forgiveness on other principles and feelings altogether to that source from which alone it can come. The love of the people of Scotland for those whom they have loved has not been exclusive—it has been comprehensive. They left the appearance of their different characters, and honored them for every advance they made, provided they saw the strength of character, moral and intellectual. Such a people as this, possessing such feelings, could not but look upon Robert Burns, and while they admired him they also loved him with the truest affection, as well for the virtues as for the sorrows and the griefs of that great, but in some respects unfortunate, man. Was he worthy of their love? Taking it for granted, and we are entitled to do so—then why did they love him? They loved him because he loved his own order, nor ever desired, for a single hour, to quit it. They loved him because he loved the very humblest condition of humanity so much, that by his connection he saw more truly and became more distinctly acquainted with what was truly good, and imbued with a spirit of love in the soul of a man. They loved him for that which he had sometimes been most absurdly questioned for—his independence. They loved him for bringing sunshine into dark places; not for representing the poor hard-working man as an object of pity—but for show-

ing that there was something more than is dreamed of in the world's philosophy among the tillers of the soil and the humblest children of the land. From such a character as that which I have truly given Scotland's people, one would expect that all their poetry would be of a stern or furious kind, the poetry only of bloodshed and destruction; but it was not so, nor is it so, but with some glorious exceptions in the poetry of Burns. For how did the men of old love poetry, and was it loved in the huts where they were born? Yes. Poetry was the produce both of the heathery mountains and the broomy braes. In the days of old they had their music plaintive and dirge-like, as it sighed for the absent or wailed for the dead. These fragments, while they were fluttering about in disorder and decay, were seized upon by him, the sweetest lyrist of them all, and sometimes, by the change of a single word, he let in the soul of beauty—sometimes by a few happy touches of his genius he changed the fragment into a whole so exquisitely moulded that no one could tell which were the lines belonging to Burns and which to the poet of ancient days. But all of them now belong to Burns, for he has rescued them from oblivion. He also took the music, and set the unlettered language of nature to every necessary modulation of human speech, so that the poetry of Burns is as popular and as national as his music.

* * * * *

ROBERT BURNS, son of the poet, in reply, said:

I am sure the sons of Burns feel all that they ought on an occasion so gratifying, on which so nobly generous a welcome has been given them to the banks of Doon. Wherever they have gone they have found a reception prepared for them by the genius and fame of their father, and under the providence of God, they owe to the admirers of his genius all that they have, and what competencies they now enjoy. We have no claim to attention individually; we are all aware that genius, and more particularly poetic genius, is not hereditary—and in this case the mantle of Elijah has not descended upon Elisha. The sons of Burns have grateful hearts, and will remember, so long as they live, the honor which has this day been conferred upon them by the noble and the illustrious of our own land, and many generous and kind spirits from other lands—some from the far West, a country composed of the great and the free, and altogether a kindred people. We beg to return our most heartfelt thanks to this numerous and highly respectable company for the honor which has been done us this day.

At the Birthday Celebration in Edinburgh, January 25, 1872, Dr. WALLACE spoke "To the memory of Burns," as follows:

Some people think that a demonstration like the present, to commemorate the work done by Robert Burns, not only for Scotland, but for mankind, is a proceeding that ought not to take place, and that cannot be defended. We are charged with practising the idolatry of genius. That, I believe, is the usual phrase. I am not sure that I exactly understand its meaning. In its literal interpretation it is nonsensical. Idolatry means religious adoration presented in a certain superstitious form; and it need scarcely be said that the better one understands and sympathizes with the ideas and spirit of Burns, the less will he be inclined to regard any creature, human or otherwise, with sentiments of that description. Accordingly, I presume, that this idolatry of genius must be a figurative mode of denoting the admiration of intellectual power, apart from its moral character, in spite of disastrous influences exerted by it on the happiness or highest well-being of mankind. That the genius of Burns was splendid enough to excite this indiscriminating admiration in minds incapable of discrimination is not to be doubted; but had he really profaned his great and sacred gifts, and made himself a power for evil, I trust that none of us would have been here to do honor to his memory. But if his genius was a beneficent as well as a brilliant force in history, then it was a force upon so great a scale, of so exquisite a quality, and dealing so searchingly with subjects of the deepest human interest, that the good it wrought, necessarily corresponding in its magnitude, must evoke some expression of grateful admiration from all whose sensibilities qualify them for its proper recognition. It is the fact that the genius of Burns dealt fearlessly with the most awful questions of human destiny; investigated with original inquiry the meaning and the true aim and method of life; tasted every experience of mirthful, sad, and tender emotion; and gave out its impressions and conclusions in a wealth of thought, a beauty of form, and a memorableness of phrase that have proved an irresistible charm; and if, as I most certainly believe, this charm was on the side of good, I am not going to be such a stock or stone, or such a worse than senseless thing, as to make no sign of appreciation; and I will not submit to the insult of being called an idolater, a worshipper of mere power, because in the customary symbols of rejoicing I seek to signify my gratitude for almost the greatest blessing the human race can receive from its Maker—a great poet who is faithful to his vocation, a master-spirit who has known how to give truth and sympathy a universal and enduring hold over the hearts of men by interweaving them with the graces of immortal song. We thank heaven, and rightly, for our very meat and drink—are we to be dumb over a gift like Burns?

Let me take up that aspect of the subject which a person of my profession naturally regards with most interest and in which he feels most at home—the religious and moral influence of Burns. Was that a good, as it was inevitably a powerful influence? No man should be here who has doubts upon this point, for if Burns was a power for evil in religion and morality, nothing else that he said or did could atone for this damning offence. But he needs no apology. With all respect to various religious persons who think otherwise, I affirm my conviction that the literary influence of Burns on the spirit of religion is as valuable as it is great. Like every great poet, Burns was a preacher, and in his highest inspirations spoke to the soul. He was not a conventional preacher certainly. He laid about him in a style that would not have commended him to many Presbyteries of the Bounds. Old women of all kinds, and people of that common and coarse zeal which is color-blind to wit, humor, and the idea of art, naturally regard his unceremonious handling of their favorites as utter profanity. But to those who are able to place themselves at his point of view, and really understand him, a spirit of lofty, if often severe and indignant, religiousness breathes through the collective poetry whose publication he himself sanctioned, and which alone can be fairly taken as representing his true mind. He has pondered deeply the mystery of life and of death; he has recognized a presiding order in the world, which he identifies with a living love; he has persuaded himself that justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne; in the faith of this he accepts his lot without complaint, congratulates himself on its compensations, awaits with confidence the coming of a better day, if not here, then in that sphere of immortal being to the hope of which he unswervingly clings, and consoles himself amidst the uninstructed or hasty condemnation of society by an appeal to the impartial judgment of Omniscience; he acknowledges the imperativeness of duty; and while refusing most properly to humble himself in matters of error before other men, without taking their respective natures and circumstances into account, yet before the eye of the Eternal Holiness he admits his own responsibility for his own evil with penitent humility—

“Where with intention I have erred,
No other plea I have
But Thou art good : and goodness still
Delighteth to forgive.”

There are three species of fools that receive no encouragement, but much reproof, from the genuine and characteristic teaching of Burns—the fool that hath said in his heart there is no God, the fool that makes a mock at sin, and the fool that refuses to say “Thy will be done.” These are really the great practical questions of all religion, and the man is either unpar-

donably unjust, or unnoticeably stupid, who will insinuate that these questions are treated by Burns otherwise than with the reverence that befits their import, and with an intensity of feeling and aptness of language that will outlive far-off generations of professional preachers. Surely it is no small contribution to the influence of religion to have engraved on the hearts of a whole people such words as these :

“ The great Creator to revere
Must sure become the creature,
But still the preaching cant forbear,
And e'en the rigid feature;
Yet ne'er with wits profane to range,
Be complaisance extended;
An Atheist-laugh's a poor exchange
For Deity offended.
When ranting round in pleasure's ring
Religion may be blinded;
Or if she gi'e a random sting,
It may be little minded;
But when on life we're tempest-driven,
A conscience but a canker,
A correspondence fix'd wi' heaven
Is sure a noble anchor.”

Or to have given currency to such a philosophy of life as this :

“ Then let us che-rfu' acquiesce,
Nor make our scanty pleasures less
By pining at our state;
And even should misfortunes come,
I here wha sit ha'e met wi' some,
An's thankfu' for them yet;
They gi'e the wit o' age to youth,
They let us ken oursel',
They make us see the naked truth,
The real guid and ill.
Tho' losses and crosses be lessons right severe,
There's wit there ye'll get there ye'll find nae other where.”

Or to have popularized such an example of the true method of fighting with our own evil as this :

“ Fain would I say 'Forgive my foul offence,'
Fain promise never more to disobey :
But, should my Author health again dispense,
Again I might desert fair Virtue's way—
Again in Folly's path might go astray—
Again exalt the brute and sink the man.
Then how should I for Heavenly mercy pray,
Who act so counter Heavenly mercy's plan ?
Who sin so oft have mourned, yet to temptation ran ?
O Thou, Great Governor of all below,
If I may dare a lifted eye to Thee,
Thy nod can make the tempest cease to blow,
Or still the tumult of the raging sea ;
With that controlling power assist even me
Those headlong furious passions to confine—
For all unfit I feel my powers to be
To rule their torrent in th' allowed line—
O, aid me with thy help, Omnipotence Divine.”

The man who drives from his sympathy and love a nature from whose inmost being such utterances come stamped with

the impress of living sincerity, and who says to him, "Stand by! for I am holier than thou," has learned his Christianity in a school where I, for one, desire to take no lessons.

But it is said Burns was unsound; his creed was very scanty. Certainly his creed did not contain anything like thirty-nine articles, and I cannot say that what he had was orthodox according to the standard of Westminster. He was a latitudinarian; he was a heretic; he had no particular reverence for the artificialities of ecclesiasticism. But surely the day is past for measuring the influence of men upon the religious spirit of their time by the particular side which they espouse in the many-angled duel of polemical divinity. We are accustomed now to believe that a good man will do good, whatever theology he work with; that we may take in influences of piety even from the devoutness of heathenism, and receive stimulus in duty from contemplating

. . . "The moral works
Of black Gentoos and pagan Turks."

We regard simply with amusement the remarkable person who looks upon all the world as the enemies of God, excepting himself and the members of his own little persuasion. But in Burns' day this idea had to be done battle for. Burns had to fight with people who maintained that a man's orthodoxy, or the reverse, formed an essential element in his salvation or perdition. He certainly never scrupled to maintain the contrary. He declares continually that the judgment to be passed on any individual before God and man turns not upon his opinions, but his character; not upon his faith, but his faithfulness; not upon the rightness or wrongness of his metaphysics, but upon the goodness or badness of his spirit. That we are able, in this country, to affirm and act upon this idea without much fear of annoyance, we owe, in no small degree, to the clear-sightedness of Burns' intellect, the healthiness of his moral instincts, and the courage with which he asserted his conviction, amidst a community in which the necessary connection between soundness and safety was more rigidly insisted on than anywhere else in Protestant Christendom.

In the light of this idea, we are entitled to put out of account Burns' special theological opinions in estimating his influence upon the national religiousness in its vital character. He had the same right to his own dogmatic scheme that is possessed by any other polemical writer. The question is, How did he urge it? Was he painstaking or superficial? Was he frivolous or serious? Was he honest or sophistical? Can any man who has read Burns intelligently hesitate about the answer? His theology, such as it is, is his own. It is not a parrot's lesson, committed to memory and believed, or attempted to be believed, on simple authority. It is the fruit of his own intensest mental toil exercising itself in a hunger and

thirst after truth and reality on such materials as lay within his reach. I wish I could believe that those who condemn him have thought for themselves with a tithe of his earnestness on the great problems of religion. Then look at the zeal, the fervor, the fury of sincerity with which he advocates his views. You cannot say, here is a mere shallow trifler, a heartless scoffer. No! You may dislike what he says, but you must see that with all his heart he believes it, and that his fierce warmth and energy spring from his conviction that it would be well for you if you believed it, too. Consider also the entire and uncalculating honesty with which he spoke his mind. Well was he entitled to denounce with an unsurpassed—I had almost said unsurpassable—vehemence of withering sarcasm the wretched vices of cant and hypocrisy—not only the wicked cant and hypocrisy which is used by its selfish practiser as an instrument for oppressing others, but also the weak yet well-meaning cant and hypocrisy which is employed merely for the sake of peace or self-defence. Burns was patient of neither. He abhorred the one as base and essentially diabolical, and he scourged it as near to death as it will go; he despised the other as unmanly, and rebuked it as opposed to the progress and best interests of man. And he qualified himself for this office by being himself utterly open and frank with the world. No one can say to him, “Physician, heal thyself.” He has said somewhere:

“Ay free affhan’ your story tell
When wi’ a bosom crony;
But still keep something to yoursel’
Ye scarcely tell tae ony.”

The rule is a good one for private life; but for the prophet, the teacher of mankind, concealment of his thoughts is treachery to society. And in his public relations Burns did not “still keep something to himsel’.” If ever a great human soul was freely and fully unveiled for the delight or the instruction of the world it was the soul of Burns.

And will any man tell me that such a way of handling the topics of religion is not supremely wholesome—nay, supremely necessary? Have we not enough of spiritual sneaking and submission to authority? enough of simpering or stupid indifference to the whole subject? enough of sham earnestness and unctuous make-believe, of deliberately selfish, or weakly prudential pretense? Are we not the better of a visitation by a spirit of power like that of Burns, self-reliant and original, passionately earnest, severely, nay relentlessly, veracious? The blast may be keen, but it kills the germs of corruption; the draught may be bitter, but the end of it is health. I am well aware that to claim the author of the “Holy Fair,” “The Ordination,” the “Address of the Unco Guid,” the “Dedication to Gavin Hamilton,” and “Holy Willie’s Prayer” (though Burns never gave that to the world) as exercising a salutary

influence upon religion, seems to many people paradoxical, if not profane. And so it would be if religion were simply a thing for childish men and the weaker order of women. I can quite understand that they should be scandalized beyond measure by Burns. But religion is for mature and strong natures as well as for the juvenile and the feeble. It is long since it was known that there must be milk for babes and strong meat for men. It is right not to offend the little ones unnecessarily, but we cannot let the weak brother have everything his own way. In private it may be demanded by kindness to avoid chafing his tender skin, but the public teacher must not keep him exclusively in view, but set forth principles in their fullness, and use freely any weapons of argument or ridicule, or whatever else can enforce his meaning, since men must be provided for as well as children. And whoever affects a manly religiousness will be none the worse, but greatly the better, for the study of Burns, provided he understands the province of art. That *proviso*, however, is essential. For there are many natures with a good deal of manliness in them, that are woven of so coarse a fibre on the æsthetic side of them that they are incapable of apprehending the prerogatives and utilities of art.

The business of art is to represent both the real and the ideal; both nature as it is and nature as it might be conceived to be. But it passes no judgment upon the moral rectitude or otherwise of what it paints; that belongs to another department. A few years ago an excellent nobleman used to importune the House of Lords to provide skirts and trousers for the naked statues in the National Gallery. That good man had no conception of the function of art. He thought that sculpture was preaching indecency, while it was only representing nature. These are the sort of people who cry "O, fy!" at many of the stronger things in Burns. They think he is exhorting, where he is only painting. "Holy Willie's Prayer" may be shocking; but why? because Holy Willie himself is shocking. If the mirror gives an ugly reflection of an ugly face, it is simply to the credit of the mirror, whatever it may be to the face. This same idea of art, if they could only understand it, would put many foolish people right upon the subject of Burns' amatory and bacchanalian effusions. The poet really does not recommend unchastity and drunkenness; not even free love or free drinking. But the human spirit wants and needs an occasional escape from the restraints of conventional rules. Conventional law is, much of it, a necessary evil. We submit to it because we see that it is for the common good. But it is not always the idea of life which we would sketch for ourselves, and it is the function of poetic art to furnish a dream-land to which we may occasionally betake ourselves when weary with the jog-trot of every-day life, and enjoy in fancy what we deny ourselves in fact. Such ideal Bohemianisms are very harmless; they tell neither upon purse, nor health, nor

morals. Nay, even those coarser productions which Burns himself never published (he kept back, out of regard for the sensitive, even such pure and powerful works of art as the "Jolly Beggars" and "Holy Willie's Prayer,") but which, without his consent, and contrary to his desire, were given to the world by the relic hunters, who rifled the dead man's pockets and ransacked his writing-desks, who interviewed the Paul Pry's that peeped through his key-hole, and the Dogberrys that watched his door of nights to see if he kept elders' hours—even these are not fairly judged without reference to the idea of art. A great artist with a passion for his art may be tempted to make figures of beauty out of dirt, if there be no better material near, even though he should soil his fingers in the making; but in criticising him, it should always be a question whether it is the dirt that he delights in or his own deftness in handling it. This I will say, that, taking Burns' writings all in all, and most certainly taking the writings whose publication he himself sanctioned, there breathes through them a purity of spirit and a healthiness of tone that are in edifying contrast to the insinuating sensualisms of many of our modern poets and novelists whose praise is in all the booksellers.

I have dwelt so long upon the point on which I thought I might speak to most purpose that I can say but a sentence on the subordinate aspects of Burns' moral influence, and must pass over altogether the consideration of his works as a contribution to the emotional happiness and the intellectual wealth of nations. What noble or manly virtue fails to find recognition and support in his pages? Is it the first virtue of all, independence, resolution to rely on one's self, or suffer?—"Though much indebted to your goodness, I do not approach you, my lords and gentlemen, in the usual style of dedication, to thank you for past favors; that path is so hackneyed by prostituted learning that honest rusticity is ashamed of it. Nor do I present this address with the venal soul of a servile author, looking for the continuation of those favors: I was bred to the plough, and am independent." Happy the people whose spirits are nurtured on sentiments like these, and who nerve themselves for the struggle of life by recollecting that "A man's a man for a' that." Is it an unworldly preference of mind to money?

"O Thou who gies us each guid gift,
Gie me o' wit and sense a lift,
Then turn me, if Thou please, adrift
Through Scotland wide;
Wi' cits nor lairds I wadna shift,
In a' their pride."

Is it sympathy with everything that feels? Where can it be better learnt than from intercourse with that catholic affection which touched at the one pole the simple piety of the "Cot-

ter's Saturday Night," and at the other the uproarious freedom of the "Jolly Beggars;" which gave us the mingled humor and pathos of "Mailie's Elegy;" which saddened at the terror of the wildfowl of Lock Turit, and linked the despair of the desolate field-mouse with its own? Is it the beauty of domestic affection and duty? Who teaches so often and so well that—

" To make a happy fireside clime,
To weans and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life."

Is it the whole circle of the patriotic sentiments? Turn to "Scots wha hae," and end where you please and when you can. Is it faithfulness to the tender memories of bygone years? Go to the exquisite plaintiveness of "Highland Mary," or to the broken-hearted trance of "Mary in Heaven." Is it the crowning grace of self-command? Hear it chronicled in the writer's own heart's blood:

" The poor inhabitant below,
Was quick to learn and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow
And softer flame;
But thoughtless follies laid him low,
And stained his name.

" Reader, attend, whether thy soul
Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,
Or darkling grubs this earthly hole
In low pursuit—
Know, prudent cautious self-control
Is wisdom's root."

With the life of Burns we are not specially concerned here. It is not so much the ploughboy of Doonside, the flax-spinner of Irvine, the farmer of Ellisland, or the gauger of Dumfries, as the poet of Scotland and of humanity whom we commemorate, and for whom we make ourselves responsible. But though it is the poet we honor and thank Heaven for, we are not ashamed of the man. Others may drive Burns from their bosom; I dare not. He had the temptations that beset brilliant genius—temptations from which his detractors are mostly free. He had the temptations of a position in life most tryingly in contrast with his lofty gifts. His career has been explored by literary detectives and gossipmongers with a diligence that would have unearthed unedifying revelations in the history of the greatest saint in the calendar, and which is virtually equivalent to the extraction of secrets by the thumbscrews and the rack. Yet through it all I recognize a nature noble, manly, tender, striving towards the ideal good. No stain of meanness or dishonor rests upon his name. He owed no man anything. The greatest man of his country, and aware that he was so, he dug drains and gauged barrels, and did not grumble. He fought in secret with passions stronger than any of us can

know, and bewailed his evil in agonies of penitence which we would need his capacity of feeling to understand; and he died at thirty-seven, before the battle of the spirit was done. Let the faultless put him from them. Perhaps it is right; but they must put me from them too. A sinful, struggling man myself, I cannot abandon my great and gifted and sorrowing brother in his grief. "Restore such an one in a spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted," is a sacred law which I dare not and wish not to disobey. Grateful to Heaven for his work, proud of his name, mingling our sympathy with the recollection of his sorrows, we recall to mind to-night the asserter of truth, the smiter of dishonesty, the teacher of wisdom, the psalmist of human brotherhood, the preacher of every manly virtue, the revealer of human character, the master at once of pathos and of wit, the sweet singer of the tender feelings, the poet of our country, yet the possession of mankind, Robert Burns.

WASHINGTON—FESTIVAL OF 1874.

Mr. W. R. SMITH introduced the subject-matter of the festival in a few remarks. He said:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: It is my agreeable duty, as president of the Burns Club of Washington, to bid you a hearty welcome. We thank you, one and all, for uniting with us to honor the name, and, if it be possible, to increase the fame of him—

" Who sang of Scotia's loves and joys
 As poet's ne'er had sung,
 And woke a strain which echoes down
 The ages ever more
 American forest and Australian plain
 Swell the impassioned notes from shore to shore.
 Immortal Burns! deep in the inmost core
 Of Scotia's heart, thy image lies enshrined;
 'Midst tears and smiles, beloved more and more,
 The poet and the priest of human kind.
 What needs thy name the aid of puny art?
 It lives eternal in the human heart.
 What wealth of glory Scotia owes to thee,
 Immortal Burns!
 Her noblest one!
 In the far west thy star hesperian glows;
 In the far east it shines another sun.
 Bend low, my boys, before this simple shrine!
 Bend low to Burns, to poesy divine!"

These lines, fresh from Auld Scotland, I found as a contribution from Dunbar to the poet's corner of a rural paper, published in Haddington. They indicate clearly the true position of the poet, and may be taken as proof of the truth of Thomas Carlyle's prophecy that time would but increase the fame of Burns. His article in the *Edinburgh Review*, 1828, con-

taining this prophecy, together with John Wilson's great essay on the genius of the poet, did much to teach the people to think aright about Burns.

Another glorious exposition of the poet, and a truly Christian examination of the character of the man, was made by the Rev. Dr. Wallace, just two years ago, in a speech at the birthday celebration in Edinburgh. This gentleman's intellectual strength seems worthy of his famous name.

His speech, together with Carlyle's letter about Burns' Clubs generally being aimless things, with a very little of Burns and a great deal of self in them, induced us, as a club, to *examine ourselves*, and to make an effort to elevate and give a higher aim to our association. The Burns Club as now established is for the purpose of gathering together the various editions of Burns' works—biographies, illustrations, eulogies, portraits, in short, everything that can in any way illustrate the land, the literature, and character of Burns—to have regular meetings whereat his poems may be read, his songs sung, addresses delivered, criticisms read, and to make an earnest effort to honor his memory by a celebration of his birthday; thus to keep in remembrance our undying admiration of the noble qualities which distinguished him while living.

Ladies and gentlemen, with your kind co-operation we can make the Burns Club of Washington worthy of the man and the place; worthy of the author of that grand Declaration of Independence—

“A man's a man for a' that.”

Worthy of the home of that political idea—

“The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.”

Ladies and gentlemen, words cannot utter the gladness of my own heart, and I speak also for those congenial co-operating spirits who have worked and struggled together to secure this magnificent meeting in honor of our darling poet.

We are proud to have with us those whom the nation delighteth to honor with her highest positions, to speak for the immortal author of—

“Scots wha ha'e wi' Wallace bled.”

Again let me thank you in the name of the Club for your presence.

The president then read the following note from the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Hon. JAMES G. BLAINE:

FIFTEENTH STREET, 29th January, 1874,
Thursday Evening.

To the President of the Burns Club:

A hoarseness which has been coming on me through the day deprives me of the pleasure I had anticipated of proposing a toast to the memory of Burns, and adding a word of introduction to my friend, Gen. Garfield. My task, however, would be superfluous, even if I could be present, for the General needs neither introduction nor commendation to the Burns Club. He will speak to you in a manner that will make you thank me for considerably staying away and not delaying his eloquent words.

The Scotch are always proud of their birth and their blood: and this pride, I venture to testify, will bear transplanting, and can be inherited in its full strength at least down to the fifth generation. Wherever you find one who traces even a remote relationship to "Auld Scotia," you will find a hearty admirer of Burns. But genius is not confined to lands or latitudes. It belongs to the whole world; and to-night on three continents and the far-off isles of the Southern Sea the memory of the great poet will be celebrated with admiration, enthusiasm, and affection.

In haste, sincerely yours,

J. G. BLAINE.

Gen. JAMES A. GARFIELD, on coming forward to respond to the toast "The day we celebrate," was greeted with warm applause. He said:

I have no doubt that the kind reference to me by the Honorable Speaker, in the letter which has just been read, springs from his remembrance of the fact that a few years ago he and I enjoyed the great pleasure of visiting the land of Burns, and making the tour of the Scottish lakes in company. And who that has once seen it can forget such a land, or wonder that its rugged and noble beauties should have added inspiration to the genius of its poets? Who can forget the excursion along the banks of the Doon, where every turn of the road and river has been immortalized by the ride of "glorious" Tam?

I take this occasion, Mr. Chairman, to thank you and the Burns Club of Washington for the pleasant opportunity which you have afforded me to turn aside for a moment from the exacting duties of public life and from its sharp conflicts, to enjoy this festival, and to unite in doing honor to the memory and genius of the foremost song-writer of the world.

It is usual to praise Burns chiefly because of the great contrast between the splendor of his work and the humbleness of his origin. But genius needs no apologies on that score; and I do not hesitate to challenge the comparison between his

works and those of any other poets who have wrought in the same field.

In the highest class of lyric poetry three names stand eminent. Their field covers eighteen centuries of time, and the three men are Horace, Beranger, and Burns. It is an interesting and suggestive fact that each of these sprang from the humble walks of life. Each may be described as one

"Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil,"

and each proved, by his life and achievements, that, however hard the lot of poverty, "a man's a man for a' that."

Permit me to glance a moment at the characteristics of each. Horace, the son of a freedman, was born among the wild scenes and simple virtues of the Sabine country. His opportunities for education were greater than either of the other two with whom I am comparing him. But he began his career as a treasury clerk, living on a pittance that scantily furnished him with "bread and lentils;" and yet, in that humble position, he laid the foundation of a fame whose glory shines down across the ages with lustre ever brightening as the centuries advance.

The Roman language was the severe language of law, of war, of stately oratory; but it was songless, until Horace came and attuned its measures to the melody of the lyre. He had a right to boast that he was "the first to wed Italian measures to Æolian song." It may have been thought boastful in him, when, in the last ode of the third book, he ventured to predict that his verses would be remembered as long as the high priest of Apollo and the silent vestal virgin should climb the steps of the Capitol. But his prophecy has been more than fulfilled. Fifteen centuries ago the sacred fires of Vesta went out, never to be rekindled. For a thousand years Apollo has had no shrine, no priest, no worshipper on the earth. The steps of the Capitol, and the temples that crowned it, live only in dreams. But the songs of Horace are read and admired in all nations, wherever learning and culture are cherished. His pages glow to-day with all the brightness and beauty that delighted the social life of Italy eighteen hundred years ago.

Beranger, the second in the group, was a child of poverty, born in an obscure corner of France. Catching the spirit of liberty inspired by the French revolution, he crowned the rude dialect of Normandy with the glory of immortal song. He not only ennobled his native tongue, but fired the heart of France with an enthusiasm and fervor which only a born poet can create.

Who will deny that Burns is not only worthy to stand in this group, but that in many respects his glory outshines that of the Roman and the Norman? Born in a country whose natural beauty is in strange contrast with the sterility of its soil,

his early life was passed in the extremest poverty. Doomed to the hard slavery of mechanical toil; receiving not more than seven pounds sterling for the labor of a whole year, yet, out of this narrow and oppressive life, which ended at the early age of thirty-eight, he poured forth melodies so sweet and so perfect that they echo and re-echo to-day in all languages and in all hearts as the voice of Great Nature singing to her children. If Horace attuned the stately language of Rome to the lyre, Burns lifted up into immortal song, and saved from perishing, the dialect of his native land. If Horace "raised his mortals to the skies," we may say, with truth, that Burns "drew the angels down."

Taine, the great French critic, admits that Burns is greater than Beranger; and time alone can test the relative greatness of Burns and Horace. Burns was indeed the prophetic voice of the new age—the age born of the French revolution. Rising above the trammels of birth and poverty, he spoke for the great voiceless class of laboring men throughout the world, while kings and countries listened in wonder and amazement.

A great writer has said that it took the age forty years to catch Burns, so far was he in advance of the thoughts of his time. But we ought not to be surprised at the power he exhibited. We are apt to be misled when we seek to find the cause of greatness in the schools and universities alone. There is no necessary conflict between nature and art. In the highest and best sense, art is as natural as nature. We do not wonder at the perfect beauty of the rose, although we may not understand the mysteries by which its delicate petals are fashioned and fed out of the grosser elements of the earth. We do not wonder at the perfection of the rose, because God is the artist. When He fashioned the germ of the rose tree, He made possible the beauties of its flower. The earth and air and sunshine conspired to unfold and adorn it; to tint and crown it with peerless beauty. When the Divine Artist would produce a poem, He plants the germ of it in a human soul, and out of that soul the poem springs and grows as from the rose tree the rose.

Burns was a child of nature. He lived close to her beating heart; and all the rich and deep sympathies of life grew and blossomed in his own. The beauties of earth, air, and sky filled and transfigured him:

"He did but sing because he must,
And piped but as the linnets sing."

With the light of his genius he glorified "the banks and braes" of his own land; and, speaking for the universal human heart, has set its sweetest thoughts to music—

"Whose echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow forever and forever."

WASHINGTON—FESTIVAL OF 1875.

Mr. W. R. SMITH opened the proceedings of the evening as follows :

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN : As President of the Burns Club I bid you welcome, and thank you for uniting with us to do honor to one of the most gifted beings that ever adorned and delighted our race. One hundred and sixteen years ago Robert Burns was born.

“ Upon a stormy, winter night,
Scotland’s bright star first rose in sight,
Beaming upon as wild a sky
As ever to prophetic eye
Proclaimed that Nature had on hand
Some work to glorify the land—
Within a lonely cot of clay
That night her great creation lay.

“ Coila—the nymph that round his brow
Twined the red-berried holly bough—
Her swift-winged heralds sent abroad,
To summon to that bleak abode,
All who on genius still attend
For good or evil to the end.
They came obedient to her call—
The immortal infant knew them all.

“ Sorrow and Poverty—sad pair—
Came shivering through the wintry air :
Hope and Pity and Love were there.

* * * * *

“ Wit with a harum-scarum grace,
Who smiled at Laughter’s dimpled face.
Labor, who came with sturdy tread,
By high-souled Independence led.
Care, who sat noiseless on the floor,
While Wealth stood up outside the door.

* * * * *

“ Then Coila raised her hollied brow
And said: ‘ Who will this child endow ? ’
Said Love, ‘ I’ll teach him all my lore,
As it was never taught before ; ’
Said Pity, ‘ It shall be my part
To gift him with a gentle heart.’
Said Independence, stout and strong,
‘ I’ll make it to wage war with wrong,’
Said Wit, ‘ He shall have mirth and laughter,
Though all the ills of life come after.’

“ Warbling her native wood notes wild,
Fancy but stooped and kissed the child,
While through her locks of golden hair
Hope looked down with a smile on Care.

“ Said Labor, ‘ I will give him bread ; ’
‘ And I a stone when he is dead,’
Said Wealth, while Shame hung down her head.

“ ‘ He'll need no monument,' said Fame ;
 ‘ I'll give him an immortal name ;
 When obelisks in ruin fall,
 Proud shall it stand above them all ;
 The daisy on the mountain side
 Shall ever spread it far and wide ;
 Even the roadside thistle-down
 Shall blow abroad his high renown.' ”

“ Said Time, ‘ That name while I remain
 Shall still increasing honor gain,
 'Till the sun sinks to rise no more,
 And my last sand falls on the shore
 Of that still, dark, and unsailed sea,
 Which opens on Eternity.' ”

These words by Thomas Miller but speak in prophetic rhapsody of what will be the fate of the name we are met to honor to-night. The ovation to Burns on his centennial birthday was the greatest honor ever paid to a poet. When in 1844 his son returned from India 70,000 persons honored him for his father's sake by a festival on the banks of “bonnie Doon.” Christopher North then said: “Burns is among the highest order of human beings who have benefited their race by the expression of noble sentiments and glorious thoughts.” This estimate is not overdrawn. “Has he not elevated honest rusticity, lightened the burden of care, aided to reconcile poverty to its lot, advanced the dignity of labor, placed a crown on the head of an honest man ‘though e'er so poor,’ and proclaimed him ‘King o' men for a' that?’ ”

The president then read the following letter from the Hon. Wm. P. FRYE:

WASHINGTON, *January 16, 1875.*

W. R. SMITH, Esq.,

President of the Burns Club :

MY DEAR SIR: I accepted, with pleasure and with pride, your kind invitation to address the Burns Club at their annual meeting, but unexpectedly find that I cannot fulfill the engagement, it having been determined by the committee, of which I am a member, to go to Louisiana at once. To simply say that I regret this is a cold expression of my feelings, for I should delight to speak, from a full heart, of Scotland, of Wallace, of Bruce, and of Burns, who has made for them all a glorious immortality.

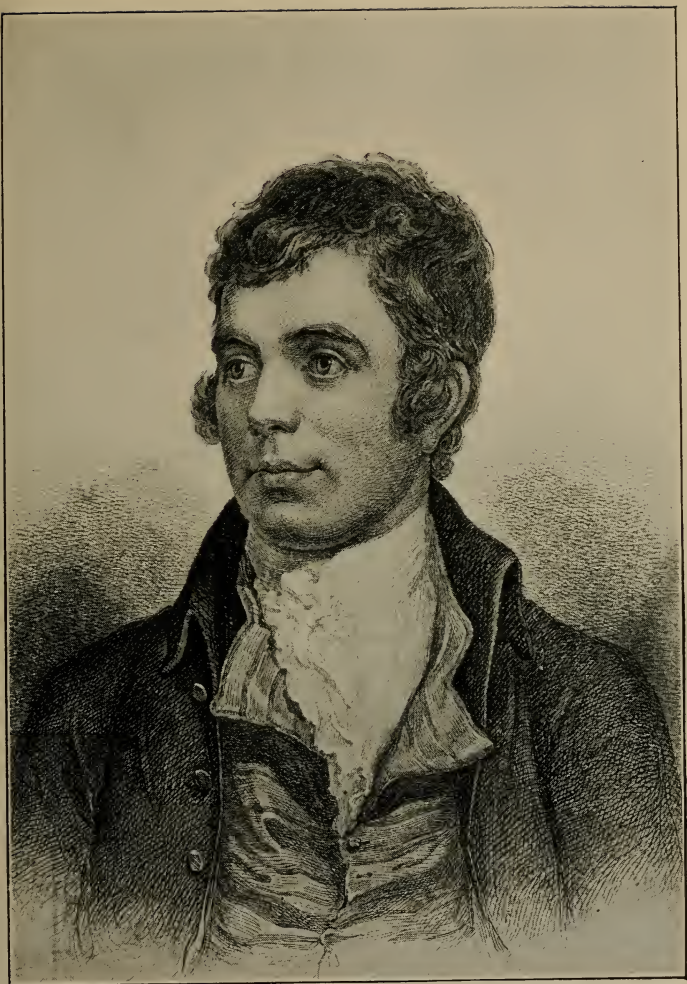
And yet our mission south, it seems to me, would have been regarded by your great poet a sacred duty. Since that sweetest songster that ever sang warbled the magical words, “A man's a man for a' that,” a great struggle has been waged throughout the world, sometimes silently, sometimes terribly, to prove the fidelity of Burns to truth in that utterance. Our own country has been the theatre of one of the fiercest conflicts, the issue of which is not even yet made certain. May the end show—

“The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
 Is king o' men for a' that.”

May Heaven bless old Scotland, her mountains and valleys, her Doon and her Clyde, her Yarrow and her Tweed. “Long may her hardy sons of rustic toil be blessed with health and peace and sweet content.” We bless thy memory, too, Robert Burns, who so loved old Scotia, her men and women, even her mice and daisies, “her silly sheep” and “courie cattle,” aye, who loved all things both great and small, and couldn't hate even “auld Nickie-ben.”

Respectfully,

WM. P. FRYE.



ROBERT BURNS.

From an etching by Nicholson after Nasmyth, 1819.



The Hon. JAMES MONROE, of Ohio, was then introduced, and made a felicitous and scholarly address, in which he compared the various British poets, placing Burns as next to Shakespeare in his power of touching the universal heart. There were no Milton clubs, no Byron clubs, not even a Tennyson club; while Burns clubs existed all over the world, wherever the English language was spoken, and they would continue to exist for all time.

The president of the Club, in introducing Hon. S. S. Cox, said :

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I have now the pleasure to introduce to you the American biographer of his "*Satanic Majesty in Literature*;" as a "*Buckeye Abroad*" in search of "*Winter Sunbeams*" he no doubt made some further acquaintance with his majesty, and can perhaps enlighten us on the doings of Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie. Our poet treated Satan kindly and was "wae to think upon yon place, e'en for his sake;" so does his American biographer.

Hon. S. S. Cox was received with hearty applause, and spoke as follows :

Your president introduces me somewhat vaguely as one of the biographers of Satan. I had supposed my humble article was long since forgotten. It is said in Scripture that the devil and all his works shall perish. I wonder that all the works *on* the devil himself have not perished. But really, he is not so black after all. He has many winning ways. He is as much entitled to a biographer as a witch to a cat. I can see that my friend, the president, takes a family and national pride in him. When the article referred to was printed it was for the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, and intended to glorify "Old Nick" in literature. How I omitted Burns' "Auld Hornie" or "Clootie" I can scarcely tell. I was quite young then; had not mixed much in society or politics; had not come to Congress; and, therefore, my knowledge of deviltry was limited. The longer I live the more I see of it—and perhaps the more we live the more we tolerate the evil genius.

Indeed, the Scotch devil, as organized by the genius of Burns, is a eulogy to his better qualities. It seems at first blush to be suggested by Milton's apostrophe to the Prince, who led the embattled Seraphim against Heaven; but his is a better Satan than the warrior of Milton. He takes no delight in the squealing sinner. Old "Clootie" has a nice send-off for his noted name. Burns makes him rage, to be sure, like a roaring lion, "tirling the kirks." He reproduces the wildness

of the "lonely glen" and ruined castle amidst the windy winter nights. He calls on the warlocks and hags of the kirkyards, the water kelpies of the ford, and the spunkies of the moss as his associates, until he brings his Satan *nunc pro tunc* into Paradise *incog*, to give the infant world a "shog," and then makes him play practical jokes on Job, until he fairly boiled to pardon him by the benevolent universalism of the last verse—

"I'm wae to think upon yon den—
E'en for your sake."

which, out of the *patois*, means—I don't want a hell, even to put the devil in.

But this remarkable good-natured devil of Burns has some peculiarities of character and conduct which reminded one of the comic devil of the sacred drama of the Middle Ages. He is not the devil represented in ancient or modern times. He is more Robert Burns than Robert Le Diable. He has as little of the Assyrian devil as of the Prometheus of Æschylus. But is he not comprehended in the universal genius of Goethe? Mephistopheles takes any shape. He is the standing Diabolos of the Greek, the adversary of Job, the serpent of Eden, the dragon of the Revelation, and always jolly. I am not sure but that the infinite variety of the article which Washington and its lobbies furnish was anticipated by Goethe, if not by Burns. Where did not Mephistopheles lurk? Where do we not find that spirit of evil? Not the old theological animal, with horn and hoof, such as the excommunicated from Kirk were possessed of, and such as old wives tell of; but the sly devil, which dances in the eye of beauty, gambols in the polka and german, and on the faro table; puts on the claw-hammer of the courtier and the frock of the preacher; pores over the misals of the scholar and the "ayes and noes" of Congress. He is to be found in the imperial palace or the poorest hovel. You may see this universal spirit in the bourses of speculation, and he conceals under the big ulster overcoat the forked tail and lightnings of his unscrupulous intellect! The Burns devil is, however, something kinder and more human than this universal genius. In one poem Burns makes him an exciseman, and though not strictly defined, it may be said of him, as some one said of Raphael's devil in the Sistine Chapel, "If he is not the devil, it is some d—d thing or other." He would not have the devil here for a time, although he would not object to a "devil of a time."

The truth is, we each carry our devil around with us as a part of our personality. Why should not Burns' idea of incarnate evil be as jolly as himself, who was an exciseman? And what pleasure could the exciseman take in the unnatural destruction or unjust distribution of Scotch whiskey? I can well imagine how, in the regions of northern Scotland, where an Englishman (Shakespeare) located a "blasted heath," you

know, and peopled its air with beings of metaphysical entity, that a grand and terrific ideal of the spirit of evil should arise, like Hecate or the witches of Macbeth, from the dreary mists of the Highlands. But Burns' devil, while he once rode on the blasts with Tam O'Shanter, had a more social way—as a government official. He was not a conservator of fruits and flowers, like you, Mr. President. He was a simple government detective. He seized spirits, it is true, as Satan does, and he confiscated them to the best purposes. He would have been an invaluable aid under any administration. I think he may now and then be detected in our "secret service."

But, ladies and gentlemen, the genius of Burns was not limited to creations of evil. It would have been more grateful to me this evening to have discussed the genial and etherial qualities of his song. How he sympathized with nature; its beauties, its attractions, its humility, and its heart. How sweetly flowed the current of his rhyme, as he gave new purple to the heather and new blush to the rose! How the hours winged their angel flight in the loved homes which he peopled with his genius!

With all the splendid galaxy of Scotch intellect, and wherever the Scotch mind goes—as far as a thistle can fly, and as frequently as it can produce—no such name as that of Robert Burns has gone so far or been heralded so prodigally and warmly. If Watts in invention, Adam Smith in economy, Brougham in eloquence, Knox in theology, Hume in history, Sydney Smith in wit, Jeffrey in criticism, and Scott in fiction were all combined in one effulgent star, it would not equal the splendors of Burns! When Burns wrote the couplet—

"Rank is but the guinea's stamp,
A man's the gold for a' that"—

he made his name foremost among those who have championed the natural nobilities of mankind. It expresses the "legal tender" of the Creator! Fresh out of the natural "pockets," where the richest nuggets nestle, he drew the ingot which no alloy of human error ever tarnished or can ever destroy. A man's the gold for all that may happen to him in the accidents, fortunes, deprivations, and vicissitudes of time. As such he will be tested in the furnace of affliction, and in the great assay when the genuine shall be separated from the counterfeit.

I have referred to the intellect of Scotland, whose honors are recorded by Buckle. Where has not that intellect gone? Is it limited to any hemisphere or sphere? Is not Livingstone himself a Scotchman? He went into the very heart of Africa. When Burns sings that a man's a man, I know just what he means. Why, sir, there is a splendid Presbyterian barber in this city—as black as black can be. His name is Campbell. He comes of the clan. He is surely a Scotchman. I know it, if not by his slogan, then by his brogan. But if the Scotch

Livingstone could find the interior of Africa, why may not Campbell? My distinguished friend from North Carolina, (Mr. Waddell,) who honors his State as well by his studies as by his political eminence, who is now present and blushing while I speak, made an interesting *brochure* to prove that the Welsh and Irish were in North Carolina in the 12th century. *A fortiori*, why should not the Campbells be found in Africa?

In conclusion, therefore, I rise from the spirit of deviltry enshrined in the poetry of our bard to those other and more elevated creations which have added a lustre to Caledonia, and made a new history for the lyric muse! May your enjoyment of this anniversary be unalloyed by the presence of any other than that of the blithe and bonnie spirit which makes that muse as mirthful as it is immortal!

THE FESTIVAL OF 1876.

MR. GEORGE COWIE, president, delivered a short but appropriate address, welcoming in a most cordial manner the guests of the Club, to the number of over six hundred, and then introduced Hon. WM. P. FRYE, of Maine, who spoke as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT: I saw in the press a few days since that I was to deliver an address before this Club; that it would undoubtedly sparkle with wit and abound in eloquence. What a sarcasm! If I dreamed that you were expecting anything of this kind I should at once follow the example of the fellow who, having forced head and shoulders through his neighbor's paling, being discovered and accosted with, "You infamous scoundrel, where are you going?" replied, "Out," and went. I have no fountain on which I can draw at sight for eloquence and wit. I have a heart beating always in sympathy with Scotland, and a love going out abundantly to Scotchmen and Scotchwomen. How could it be otherwise? In the House I am flanked by my friends McDill and McDougal, while in my rear sit Wilson and Phillips, and right before me is the smiling, honest face of my old friend, the Cerberus of the Flower Garden, Smith. Besides, my wife, who came to me through the McDougals and Gregorys, is so much of a Scotchwoman that she rules her household with love and a rod—the rod being in the majority. So true is she to her ancestry, if she had been standing beside the stern old Scotchwoman who listened to the piteous appeals of Hume, the infidel, for help, as he was sinking in the quagmire, and made him repeat the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments as condition precedent to his salvation, I think she would have cried "Amen and amen!" These reasons for sympathy surely ought to inspire me to say a few kind and honest words to you on this anniversary occa-

sion. Wherever I go, whatever circumstances surround me, I am loyal to the North. I am as true to it as was "John Hatteras" to the Pole. Even if I should go mad, as did he, still my steps, with his, would ever turn thitherward. I love its mountains and its valleys, its rivers and its lakes, its ice and its snow, its barrenness and its ruggedness. I love its men who earn their bread by the sweat of the brow; who never saw that land which, "tickled with a hoe, would laugh with a harvest;" who plough, harrow, dig with spade and mattock, and then are supremely content if only it smiles with an average crop. They are hardy, honest, God-fearing, and country-loving. The distinguished gentleman who is to deliver the address, to which this is only a feeble introduction, will forgive me, I know, if I seem somewhat exuberant over my own, even if he thinks my imagination is somewhat too warm over "the eternal solitudes of snow which mantle the ice-bound North." He can well afford to, for the man who made for the ignoble Duluth such a glorious immortality in an hour's time, is abundantly able to take care of the blue-grass regions of the fertile Kentucky or "the fragrant savannas of the sunlit South."

In early boyhood, romance and poetry had made sacred to me Old Scotia's Shores; had clothed with a glorious immortality her Ben Lomond, Ben More, and Ben Ness; her Clyde and her Tay, her Tweed and her Dee—crystallized them all into monuments of liberty, loyalty, and patriotism. And when later in life the pages of history opened to me I learned that neither novelist nor poet had told half of the wonderful story. Caledonia, way back in the ages of darkness, peopled by fierce, savage, and idolatrous tribes, but brave and liberty-loving, almost alone of the nations, fought successfully the Roman empire; so brave and so fierce were they that this mistress of the world thought it discreet to wall them in.

Scotland, for more than a thousand years, for liberty and the right to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, fought the whole power of England, until the blood of her brave sons washed every mountain side, drenched every valley, tinged every lake and river. Now you know well that the cause a nation espouses and fights for has a reflex action upon her people. Spain fought for conquest and slavery, and to-day is a bankrupt beggar among the nations, impotent to hold in subjection one little Island of the Sea.

Rome fought for glory and empire, and she is only known in history. Our Republic fought for liberty, equal rights, and humanity, and this year the world will join in her Centennial. Scotland came out from her fiery furnace of war purified. Those savage, idolatrous tribes of Caledonians gradually grew into the brave, intelligent, God-fearing soldiers, who just before entering the battle at Bannockburn, to a man knelt, and with uplifted hearts and hands asked help from the God of

Battles. King Edward, seeing them, cried, "The cravens already ask mercy;" to whom an English baron replied: "Sir, they ask no mercy of us; they pray for help from God. They will conquer or die." And they conquered! Her chieftains, fierce and cruel, became the William Wallace, as brave as Henry, and as chivalrous as Bayard; the Robert Bruce, who could defend the pass against an army unaided, who could slay a score of armed men with his own hands, and yet be as gentle and tender as a woman; who, when his army was retreating before an overwhelming force of English and Irish, hearing one day an outcry, and on inquiry, learning that it was a poor camp-follower giving birth to a child, and in a terrible agony of fear lest she might fall into the hands of the "*Child eating Barbarians*," called a council of his officers, said to them, "Shame on the man born of woman, nursed by her tenderness, who will desert a mother in the hour of her travail and pain," ordered a halt of his army, and held them there until the woman recovered, then marched to the mountain in safety. That single act of gentleness consecrated his name beyond all the glories of the battle-field. The orator relates of Sir Philip Sidney, that mortally wounded, borne from the battle-field, thirsty and dying, a cup of cold water was passed to him; he seeing a soldier by the roadside, gave it to him, saying, "Brother, thy necessities are greater than mine." That single act of self-forgotten sacrifice consecrated the name of Sidney more than all the battles fought or victories won. These are the highest type of the soldier, the christian soldier, the warrior of courage and gentleness. Slowly, but surely, Scotland climbed to the highest type of civilization, that born of education and religion, of the school and the Bible, of the altar of the Cotter's Saturday Night in every house. Look upon her in the 18th century. In the 17th it was enacted that a school-house should be erected in every parish, and a schoolmaster appointed. Early in the 18th her people were more generally educated than any other in Europe. The world knew and admired her historians, her poets, her philosophers, her scientists, and the nations paid tribute to her universities at Edinburgh, Glasgow, St. Andrew's, and Aberdeen. The *Edinburgh Review* and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* are to-day unrivalled in the world, while Edinburgh is the only rival of London in the British Empire as a publishing centre. In the arts, sciences, agriculture, and manufactures she has no occasion to hide her face. Such a country—so cold, so barren, so mountainous, so torn and distracted by ruthless wars—only 300 miles long and 200 wide, with such glorious fruits of the highest civilization! Whence did it come? From the perpetual contest for liberty and equal rights and religion, the school-book, and the Bible. This civilization, indigenous to the cold countries of the north, crossed the ocean, landed on the bleak, barren coast of Massachusetts, toiled, suffered, and

fought, until one hundred years ago, it declared, in words that shall live forever, making glad the hearts of toiling millions, "All men are created free and equal," and a clarion voice from Scotia's shore replied, "A man's a man for a' that." Under its inspiration, independence was achieved, and England lost from her diadem one of its brightest jewels. But barbarism, too, had crossed the same ocean, landed on the friendly, fertile, and sunny shores of the South; it flourished, grew strong and stronger, until it flaunted its black flag in the very face of civilization, and threatened its own terrible supremacy. Then, again, this pure spirit of the North put on the armor, girded on the sword, and went forth to do battle. Trusting to the God of Battles, inspired with "A man's a man for a' that," it conquered, and no more forever shall a slave tread the wine-press in our fair land. The war over, Christian civilization said, forgive, poured out the balm of Gilead without stint or measure, and this Centennial year we have a country free, united, purified, and sanctified.

More than a century ago this glorious Old Scotland, inspired by such a civilization, labored and brought forth a child, laid him in a mud-covered hut, gave him to a mother who loved the "dear God," and to a father who feared Him. Then the boy, with no lingering step, with satchel and book, went to the humble school, while at home the master and the mistress taught,

"An' O, be sure to fear the Lord alway,
And mind your duty duly morn and night;
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray
Implore His counsel an' assisting might,
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright."

Thus instructed he grew apace, and next we find him a whistling plow-boy, turning the daisy beneath the share, and driving "the cruel coulter thro' poor mouser's cell." He studied, he worked, he prayed, he loved, he suffered—he sang, until one day he wrote his name, "Robert Burns, Poet." And one hundred years from the day this child was born, every city in the civilized world celebrated his anniversary. Historians, poets, philosophers, orators, and the great men of all lands paid him homage, while the lowly sang his praises. To no man was ever such homage paid before, and I think I may safely say that the name of "Robert Burns, Poet," has been and is dearer to more hearts than any other except alone that of Him who was born in a manger, toiled, suffered, and died that we might live. From whence came this wondrous power? How did he win this priceless gift of universal love? It was not bought with money. The price he paid was the mud-covered hut, the sterile land, the poverty, the sorrow, the labor, the suffering life among the lowly. Scotland, her mountains, her glens, her lakes, her rivers, her battles, her heroes, her schools, and her altars, were his inspiration. Nature, with her

rod, touched his heart, and pure limpid streams of sympathy, of charity, of loyalty, of purity, of wisdom, of mirth, and of satire, sprang forth—heart speaking to heart. This is why all men have given him an immortality as tender, loving, and blessed as he gave to Mary in heaven. All men; ah, no! there are a few cold-blooded, puritanical—I beg pardon of the Puritans—Pharisees, who see in Burns the scoffer, the wine-bibber, the reveller, the keeper of low company. They stand upon a pedestal of ice and look down upon his warm, loving heart, and feel no responsive warmth in theirs. Even such must yield some respect to Burns, the exciseman. He performed his duties faithfully; he was economical in his expenditures; he stole no stamps, and though his salary was only fifty pounds a year he asked no back pay, demanded no increase, passed no crooked whiskey. To be sure, he was now and then late at his office, but, like Charles Lamb, went home early enough to make it up. Even Henderson, with all his eloquence, with all the facts in the case, forgetting his sworn duty as a prosecuting officer, and throwing into the scales against the prisoner all of the imaginary infamies of the most infamous administration of ancient or modern times, could not have forced from a jury of his peers a verdict of “guilty.”

“Then fill the sparkling goblet high,
And let no discord stain it;
Let joy illumine each manly eye,
While to the dregs we drain it!
To Burns! To Burns! The King of Song!
Whose lyre shall charm all ages!
Mirth, Wisdom, Love, and Satire strong,
Adorn his deathless pages.”

Hon. J. PROCTOR KNOTT, of Kentucky, was next introduced, and addressed the assembly in the following happy vein:

Mr. Chairman, when I received the very complimentary notice that I was expected to be present and address you this evening it occurred to me that the gentlemen who had it in charge to arrange the programme for the occasion had certainly committed a most singular mistake. I could conceive of no possible reason why they should consider me capable of contributing a single additional ray to the resplendent halo which will forever encircle the immortal name of Scotland's favorite bard. It is true I had always felt proud, and perhaps somewhat more pious and patriotic than most people, on account of my direct descent from the sturdy old Covenanters who fought for the faith of their fathers at Drumclog and Bothwell's Brigg, and whose descendants signed the original declaration of independence at Mecklenberg. Yet I can scarcely refrain from exclaiming, in the language of my saintly old friend, Holy Willie:

“What was I, or my generation,
That I should get sic exaltation?”

But since I have listened to the address of the distinguished gentleman whose eloquent periods still tingle through every fibre and tissue of our souls, and hold us as under the spell of some delicious enchantment, I am satisfied that you will agree with me in the opinion that they have been guilty of a still more egregious blunder—one, in fact, which ought to be sufficient to blast their reputation as literary caterers for all time to come—the miserable, unpardonable mistake at a festival like the present, of bringing on the bacon and cabbage after we have had the strawberries and ice cream. It is but charitable to suppose, and perhaps but justice to the gentlemen who invited me, to say that I am here to-night purely by mistake. For I cannot imagine that they could have had any secret malice against me which they wished to gratify by enticing me into one of the most difficult and trying positions I ever occupied in my life—the humiliating predicament of being compelled to realize, to its fullest extent, my own utter and abject poverty of thought and expression when measured by the theme upon which I am expected to speak. For what can I say of the genius of Robert Burns which has not been already said a thousand times, and that, too, with an elegance, a beauty, and a force of diction far beyond the reach of any power that I possess? What single thought can I suggest to any genuine lover of his species—especially to those whose halcyon days were spent on the “banks and braes o’ bonnie Doon,” or by the classic waters of “the winding Ayr”—that could make the pulse beat faster or the eye grow brighter than the simple mention of the poet’s name? Indeed, I have many and many a time remarked it as a most singular fact that you may take one by one the brightest stars in all the wondrous constellation of Scottish genius; you might recite, if you could, with an angel’s tongue, the story of their sublime achievements in arms and in art, in science, in literature, in history, in politics, in poetry, in philosophy, or in theology, and you would fail to excite such a flame of national pride and enthusiasm in any genuine Scotchman’s bosom as will be kindled by simply mentioning the name of Burns. You may inscribe their names high as you will on the scroll of human fame, and he will write the name of his country’s rustic poet high above them all; even above that of Sir Walter Scott, the mighty monarch of the human heart—

“Who on mind’s high steep could stand
And marshal with his sceptered hand
The whirlwind and the cloud,
And write a name too bright to die,
In lightning traces on the sky.”

The secret source of that mysterious magnetism which invariably attracts the warm, reverent affection of the Scottish heart to the deathless memory of their country’s poet, and which will abate no jot of its resistless power while Ben Lo-

mond stands or the Tweed rolls onward to the sea, lies far deeper than the mere sentiment of national pride or passionate patriotism. It is not because he delighted to delineate, in their own beautiful and expressive dialect, the delicate shades of Scottish feeling, or the peculiarities of thought and manners exhibited in the life of the Scottish peasant. It is not because his graphic pictures of rural life, his marvellous descriptions of local scenery, his resistless bursts of rarest humor, and the radiant brilliancy of his inimitable flashes of wit are all tinged in every lineament with a patriotic pride in the land which gave him birth and a deathless love for his native heath. It is not for any of these reasons alone, nor yet for all of them combined, that Burns occupies the first and highest place in the affections of his countrymen.

It is because he was not simply the poet of Scotland, but the poet of humanity everywhere! It is because he possessed, as no other poet ever did, the universal alchemy of genius which enabled him to bring to light the pure virgin gold in everything he touched. It is because there is not a single fibre in the heart of any human being which cannot be touched in some way by the simple magic of his unaffected muse. It is because the majestic soul exhibited in his artless lays was as expansive as his race. As I have seen it somewhere said of him, "Born in obscurity, reared in adversity, rejoicing in the smiles of nature, and scorning the frowns of fortune, he lived and died the poet of the people—the great unnumbered masses who eat their humble bread in the sweat of their own honest brows." Other great poets had their own peculiar excellencies. Milton, awed by a sublimer theme and loftier language; Shakespeare delighted while he instructed mankind in a deeper and a more diversified philosophy; Byron challenged admiration by bolder and wilder flights of the imagination; but the Scottish peasant stands alone and peerless in painting the joys and the sorrows, the agonies and the transports of the humble sphere in which he lived. Of all lyric poets the most prolific and versatile, the simplest and the most touching, and to his own class the truest and the most elevating. Aye, the most elevating! "Holy Willie" will always elevate his sanctimonious nose at the "Jolly Beggars." He will never cease to point his pharisaical finger at "honest Tam O'Shanter" and "Souter Johnnie," and you may take your "*Bible oath*" that whenever he recurs to the scene at "Poosie Nancy's," or when "Willie brewed a peck o' maut, and Rabb and Allan cam to pree," he will turn up the whites of his pious eyes in "holy rapture," and exclaim:

"I biess an' praise thy matchless might,
Whan thousands thou has left in night,
That I am here afore thy sight,
For gifts and grace,
A burnin' and a shinin' light
To a' this place.

“ Yet I am here, a chosen sample ;
 To show thy grace is great an’ ample ;
 I’m here a pillar in thy temple,
 Strong as a rock,
 A guide, a buckler, an’ example,
 To a’ thy flock.”

Yet there is a fervid piety pervading every line of the “ Cotter’s Saturday Night,” of which such canting hypocrites are as utterly ignorant as the inhabitant of the farthest hill-top of Nova Zembla is of the perfumed zephyrs that sigh through the flowery vales of Araby the blest. There is a purity of sentiment, a refinement of feeling, and a delicacy of thought in the address to the “ Wee, modest crimson-tipped flower,” of which such thin-blooded, hollow-hearted, soulless shams have no more conception than a milestone has of the sublimest symphonies of Mozart or Mendelssohn. When I speak of the elevating influence of Burns’ poetry, however, I do not allude simply to those marvellously beautiful scintillations of thought or those exquisitely delicate expressions of refined and ennobling sentiments which are found scattered like unstrung diamonds through almost everything that ever emanated from his pen, but to the dignity of the manhood which beams out of almost every line he ever wrote.

He has been called the poet of the poor. Not because he spent his genius in piteous wailing for the hardships and miseries of the millions whose lives are doomed to a ceaseless round of toil ; not because he taught them to repine at their condition, nor yet to despise or envy the advantages of rank and wealth and culture, but because he taught them to realize the dignity and majesty of their own nature, and to stand erect in the image of their Creator. It is this sublime philosophy, this grand pivotal idea in all the creations of his genius, that makes him truly the poet of humanity everywhere, and renders his name and memory sacred, not only with his own countrymen, but with honest, high-minded, whole-souled men everywhere.

There is another particular in which Burns has been rarely, if ever, equalled, and which renders his poetry peculiarly fascinating to all classes of men and to every grade of the human intellect ; I mean its aphoristic character—the wealth of wisdom he sometimes puts up in the smallest packages. For example, out of the innumerable instances which might be cited, what could possibly be more expressive of the utter uncertainty of all human calculations than his simple line :

“ The best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley.”

Where can be a more stinging rebuke to human vanity and self-conceit than in his oft-quoted ejaculation —

“ Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us
 To see oursels as ithers see us ? ”

In the simple power of word-painting—no, not painting, but that marvellous faculty of producing a real life-picture by a few rapid strokes of his magic pencil—Burns was never approached by any other poet that ever lived on earth. As an illustration of this I will pass by his universally acknowledged master-pieces and select at random a single sketch from his almost illimitable gallery. Take, for instance, a single verse from the address “To a Haggis:”

“ His knife see rustic labor dight
And cut you up wi’ ready slight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright
Like ony ditch;
And then, oh, what a glorious sight,
Warm-reekin’, rich ! ”

Can’t you see the delicious, tempting dish steaming before them? Does not the delightful odor it exhales upon the surrounding air make your very mouth water? Then see the auld guidman and his “ buirdly cheels,” armed with their horn spoons, rushing to the attack :

“ Then horn for horn they stretch and strive,
De’il tak’ the hindmost, on they drive,
Till a’ their weel-swallow’d kytes belyve
Are bent like drums;
Then auld guidman, maist like to rive,
‘ Bethankit ’ hums.”

Why, Tennyson’s world-renowned description of the charge of the six hundred at Balaklava cannot compare with it.

There is yet another peculiarity in which Burns stands without a parallel in the annals of poetic literature, and that is in the simple, unaffected patriotism and the manly pride in his own class which crops out in almost every sentence that flowed from his untutored pen. I need go no further for an illustration of this than the very poem from which I have just quoted, where he contrasts the child of affluence, reared on dainty viands, and the hardy, haggis-fed peasant of his native heather. Look at this picture :

“ Poor devil ! See him owre his trash,
As feckless as a wither’d rash,
His spindle shank a guid whip-lash,
His nieve a nit;
Thro’ bloody flood or field to dash,
Oh how unfit !

But mark the rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his wallee nieve a blade,
He’ll mak’ it whistle;
And legs, and arms, and heads will shed,
Like taps o’ thrissle.”

Nevertheless, as I have already said, mankind will never consent that Burns shall be monopolized by a single nation. Humanity loves and claims him. Vast as would be the chasm

in the literature of his own country if the glorious offspring of his genius were stricken from it, vaster still would be the void in the universal heart of man if the wide space filled by the memory of Burns would be empty; a memory which will grow brighter and yet brighter until time itself shall wax old as doth a garment, and the heavens be rolled together as a scroll.

BURNS.

[*On seeing a lock of Highland Mary's hair in the Burns monument at Ayr, Scotland*]

[From Scotch American, 1872.]

Oh, thou fair lock, thou tress of palish gold!
 What thronging memories come at sight of thee!
 How is the scroll of time again unrolled,
 Revealing that which never more may be.

I see thee waving round a brow of snow,
 As gently by the summer wind caressed,
 And wanton o'er a cheek of softest glow,
 Or nestle loving on a poet's breast.

And once again the hawthorn's snowy bough
 Scatters its sweets upon the evening air;
 Again I hear the poet's raptured vow
 That bids thee know that "bliss beyond compare."

And thou hast felt the throb of that great heart,
 That Sorrow's darkest frown could not subdue,
 But braving angry Fortune's fiercest dart,
 Was still to manhood and affection true.

Oh, Scotia! well mayst thou love thy rustic bard;
 For who, like he, has told it far and wide,
 What generous bosoms, noble hearts and true,
 Are wont beneath the hodden-gray to hide?

How thine own children, in their lowly shades,
 At Poverty's chill fount may oft have drank,
 But "blessed with health and peace and sweet content,"
 May still defy the guinea stamp of rank.

Oh, wond'rous bard! thy genius, spark divine,
 Does still this very atmosphere pervade;
 And in its light thy human frailties tinge
 As morn's obscuring mists before the sun must fade.

Oh, wond'rous bard! we still this truth must own,
 That thou in magic numbers erst did say;
 Of all the meteor-lights around thee thrown,
 'Twas light from heaven that led thy steps astray.

Oh, Scotia! as in the years Time's ceaseless course has run,
 Through what may come to thee by Fortune's future turns,
 Acknowledge him thy own, thy darling son,
 And still adore the name of *Robert Burns*.

Mrs. WM. R. SMITH.

BURNS.

To a Rose, brought from near Alloway Kirk, in Ayrshire, in the autumn of 1822.

Wild Rose of Alloway! my thanks;
Thou 'mindst me of that autumn
noon

When first we met upon "the banks
And braes o' bonny Doon."

Like thine, beneath the thorn-tree's
bough,

My sunny hour was glad and brief,
We've crossed the winter sea, and
thou

Art withered—flower and leaf.

And will not thy death-doom be
mine—

The doom of all things wrought of
clay—

And withered my life's leaf like thine,
Wild Rose of Alloway?

Not so his memory, for whose sake
My bosom bore thee far and long,
His—who a humbler flower could
make

Immortal as his song.

The memory of Burns—a name
That calls, when brimmed her fes-
tal cup,

A nation's glory and her shame,
In silent sadness up.

A nation's glory—be the rest
Forgot—she's canonized his mind;
And it is joy to speak the best
We may of human kind.

I've stood beside the cottage bed
Where the Bard-peasant first drew
breath;

A straw-thatched roof above his head,
A straw-wrought couch beneath.

And I have stood beside the pile,
His monument—that tells to
Heaven

The homage of earth's proudest isle
To that Bard-peasant given!

Bid thy thoughts hover o'er that
spot,

Boy-Minstrel, in thy dreaming
hour;

And know, however low his lot,
A Poet's pride and power.

The pride that lifted Burns from
earth,

The power that gave a child of song
Ascendency o'er rank and birth,
The rich, the brave, the strong.

And if despondency weigh down
Thy spirit's fluttering pinions then
Despair—thy name is written on
The roll of common men.

There have been loftier themes than
his,

And longer scrolls, and louder
lyres,

And lays lit up with Poesy's
Purer and holier fires:

Yet read the names that know not
death;

[there;
Few nobler ones than Burns are
And few have won a greener wreath
Than that which binds his hair.

His is that language of the heart,
In which the answering heart
would speak,

Thought, word, that bids the warm
tears start,

Or the smile light the cheek;

And his that music, to whose tone
The common pulse of man keeps
time,

In cot or castle's mirth or moan,
In cold or sunny clime.

And who hath heard his song, nor
knelt

Before its spell with willing knee,
And listened, and believed, and felt
The Poet's mastery.

O'er the mind's sea, in calm and
storm,

[showers,
O'er the heart's sunshine and its
O'er Passion's moments bright and
warm,

O'er Reason's dark, cold hours;

On fields where brave men "die or
do,"

In halls where rings the banquet's
mirth,

Where mourner's weep, where lovers
woo,

From throne to cottage hearth?

What sweet tears dim the eyes un-
shed,

What wild vows falter on the
tongue,

When "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace
bled,"

Or "Auld Lang Syne" is sung!

Pure hopes, that lift the soul above,
Come with his Cotter's hymn of
praise,

And dreams of youth, and truth, and
love,

With "Logan's" banks and braes.

And when he breathes his master-lay
Of Alloway's witch-haunted wall,
All passions in our frames of clay
Come thronging at his call

Imagination's world of air, [glee,
And our own world, its gloom and
Wit, pathos, poetry, are there,
And death's sublimity.

And Burns—though brief the race he
ran, [trod,
Though rough and dark the path he
Lived—died—in form and soul a
Man,
The image of his God.

Through care and pain, and want and
wo, [heal,
With wounds that only death could
Tortures—the poor alone can know,
The proud alone can feel ;

He kept his honesty and truth,
His independent tongue and pen,
And moved, in manhood as in youth,
Pride of his fellow men.

Strong sense, deep feeling, passions
strong,
A hate of tyrant and of knave,
A love of right, a scorn of wrong,
Of coward and of slave.

A kind true heart, a spirit high,
That could not fear and would not
bow,
Were written in his manly eye
And on his manly brow.

Praise to the bard! his words are
driven,
Like flower-seeds by the fair winds
sown,
Where'er beneath the sky of heaven,
The birds of fame have flown.

Praise to the man! a nation stood
Beside his coffin with wet eyes,
Her brave, her beautiful, her good,
As when a loved one dies.

And still, as on his funeral day,
Men stand his cold earth-couch
around,
With the mute homage that we pay
To consecrated ground.

And consecrated ground it is,
The last, the hallowed home of one
Who lives upon all memories,
Though with the buried gone.

Such graves as his are pilgrim's
shrines,
Shrines to no code or creed con-
fined—
The Delphian vales, the Palestines,
The Meccas of the mind.

Sages with wisdom's garland
wreathed,
Crowned kings, and mitred priests
of power,
And warriors with their bright sword
sheathed,
The mightiest of the hour ;

And lowlier names, whose humble
home
Is lit by Fortune's dimmer star,
And there—o'er wave and mountain
come,
From countries near and far ;

Pilgrims whose wandering feet have
pressed
The Switzer's snow, the Arab's
sand,
Or trod the piled leaves of the West,
My own green forest-land.

All ask the cottage of his birth,
Gaze on the scenes he loved and
sung,
And gather feelings not of earth
His fields and streams among.

They linger by the Doon's low trees,
And pastoral Nith, and wooded
Ayr,
And round thy sepulchres, Dum-
fries!
The poet's tomb is there.

But what to them the sculptor's art,
His funeral columns, wreaths and
urns?

Wear they not graven on the heart
The name of Robert Burns?
— *Fitz-Greene Halleck.*

ODE TO THE MEMORY OF BURNS

BY THOMAS CAMPBELL.

Soul of the Poet! wheresoe'er,
Reclaimed from earth, thy genius
 plume
Her wings of immortality:
Suspend thy harp in happier sphere,
And with thine influence illumine
The gladness of our jubilee.

And fly like fiends from secret spell,
Discord and strife, at BURNS' name,
Exorcised by his memory;
For he was chief of bards that swell
The heart with songs of social flame,
And high delicious revelry.

And love's own strain to him was
 given
To warble all its ecstasies
With Pythian words unsought, un-
 will'd—
Love, the surviving gift of Heaven,
The choicest sweet of Paradise,
In life's else bitter cup distill'd.

Who that has melted o'er his lay
To Mary's soul, in heaven above,
But pictured sees, in fancy strong,
The landscape and the livelong day
That smiled upon their mutual love?
Who that has felt forgets the song?

Nor skill'd one flame alone to fan;
His country's high-soul'd peasantry
What patriot-pride he taught! how—
 much
To weigh the inborn worth of man!
And rustic life and poverty
Grow beautiful beneath his touch.

Him, in his clay-built cot, the Muse
Entranced, and show'd him all the
 forms
Of fairy like and wizard gloom
(That only gifted Poet views),
The genii of the floods and storms,
And marshal shades from Glory's
 tomb.

On Bannock-field what thoughts
 arouse
The swain whom BURNS' song in-
 spires!
Beat not his Caledonian veins,
As o'er th' heroic turf he ploughs,
With all the spirit of his sires
And all their scorn of death and
 chains?

And see the Scottish exile, tann'd
By many a far and foreign clime,
Bend o'er his home-born verse, and
 weep

In memory of his native land,
With love that scorns the lapse of
 time,
And ties that stretch beyond the
 deep!

Encamp'd by Indian rivers wild,
The soldier, resting on his arms,
In BURNS' carol sweet recalls
The scenes that blessed him when a
 child, [charms
And glows and gladdens at the
Of Scotia's woods and waterfalls.

Oh deem not, 'midst this worldly
 strife,
An idle art the Poet brings:
Let high Philosophy control
And sages calm the stream of life,
'Tis he refines its fountain-springs,
The nobler passions of the soul.

It is the Muse that consecrates
The native banner of the brave,
Unfurling, at the trumpet's breath,
Rose, thistle, harp; 'tis she elates
To sweep the field or ride the wave,
A sunburst in the storm of death!

And thou, young hero, when thy pall
Is cross'd with mournful sword and
 plume,
When public grief begins to fade,
And only tears of kindred fall,
Who but the Bard shall dress thy
 tomb,
And greet with fame thy gallant
 shade!

Such was the soldier—BURNS, forgive
That sorrows of mine own intrude
In strains to thy great memory due.
In verse like thine, oh! could he live,
The friend I mourn'd—the brave,
 the good—
Edward that died at Waterloo!

Farewell, high chief of Scottish song!
That couldst alternately impart
Wisdom and rapture in thy page,
And brand each vice with satire
 strong,
Whose lines are mottoes of the heart,
Whose truths electrify the sage.

Farewell! and ne'er may envy dare
To wring one baleful poison-drop
From the crush'd laurels of thy bust:
But while the lark sings sweet in air,
Still may the grateful pilgrim stop,
To bless the spot that holds thy dust.

[*Reprinted, by special permission of Mr. Andrew Carnegie, from Liber Scriptorum, "The First Book of The Authors Club," 1893.*]

GENIUS ILLUSTRATED FROM BURNS.

By Andrew Carnegie.

Days come to all in this life when control of the mind is lost. The brain refuses to be harnessed and to do our bidding. The will is no longer master. It refuses to work or even to be interested. The charms pall which hitherto have never failed to allure it and bring it back to peace; but as these days of trial gradually soften, and hope returns, the unruly steed, the brain, submits again to some degree of discipline.

It was my fate last winter to pass through weary months of agonizing fear, and it may be interesting, perhaps, to others to note my experience, and learn what first enabled me to regain desired control of myself, for a man should no more permit his thoughts than his horse to run away with him. The brain must be made to tread the desired paths and answer bridle and spur instantly. He who cannot dismiss a subject from his thoughts at will is not master of himself. After many day and night walks around the library, and the handling of book after book, every one more insipid than another, and all pushed back, and no rest found, it came upon me one day that a search through my favorite Burns for nothing but pure gems would be an interesting excursion. I should dig from the mine only gems, and build an Aladdin's palace of dazzling beauty with the glittering stones; should gather them together in a pile, and gloat over them as the Prince of Ind over his jewels or the miser over his heaps of gold; should string them together as a rosary, and count my beads as holy men do, and thus bring peace to the troubled soul. No dainty repast upon the delicacies bred in a book would answer. I here must revel and gorge to surfeit—no sip of the nectar of the gods, but unlimited draughts, even to mental intoxication, would give peace and refuge from the "brain still beating on itself."

This idea was the first which interested me. It naturally led to speculations upon the nature of literary genius.

Men have exercised themselves inventing definitions for genius, as men have sought for the Philosopher's Stone or for perpetual motion, and with like disappointment, for none of these three things is to be found. Certainly genius is not to be defined; it is a thing of the spirit, and assumes too many forms for words to embrace. "An infinite capacity for taking trouble" is one attempt; "genius is work," another. Both seemingly describe the very reverse of the quality to which we apply the word genius. "Talent does what it can, genius what it must" comes nearer to it; true in a sense, but not all the truth. While it is impossible to define genius, I said to

myself, Let us try whether we cannot at least discern it, lay our fingers upon it, saying, Lo! here is the genuine essence.

Gems are proverbially small. In the vast mines of literature we find them surrounded with much ordinary material. The gem itself is comprised in a line or a word, which should be easily recognized. When it is found we cry "Eureka!" with safety. Here it is. This is genius. We say of much that precedes and follows this one line, or two, in rare instances this one word or two: "Several could have written this—talent is equal to it; but this one word or line, never. That comes not from a toiler below looking upward. The gods threw this from above into the soul of genius." Talent has climbed Parnassus, crag over crag, with us upon its shoulders, and called upon us to look back and enjoy the lovely pastoral scene below. Genius alone has scaled the height, and revealed to us the enchanted land beyond and over the mountain-top and all around the vaulted dome.

The fire of genius, we say, and all are agreed that one essential element of genius is this "fire." No amount of smoke, no amount of heat suffices. The smoke passes away, the heat becomes intense, and the flame bursts forth, or genius there is none. Wherever genius touches, the divine spark sets fire to the pile.

The test of genius in any writer, therefore, seems to be whether he has power to lead the understanding and sympathetic reader step by step, line after line, into regions more and more elevated, stirring the heart, the altar upon which the Godlike is placing the elements which he is to set blazing anon.

It will be admitted that if the title of genius can be properly applied to any human being, it is to that phenomenon, the Scottish plowman. No one questions but that he was a pure child of genius.

I took the works of the poet from their place of honor, next those of the "god of gods" in the kingdom of poetry. My working copy begins with the "Twa Dugs," the Newfoundland of the lordling, with its "braw brass collar," and the other the wisest and truest of all, that which creeps farthest into the core of the heart—the Scotch collie. The dog of the poor poet describes the joys of his own humble home. Here is a picture of the home of honest poverty which sets all dancing, young and old, as happy as only careless poverty can be:

"As bleak-fac'd Hallowmas returns,
They get the jovial, ranting kirns,
When rural life, o' ev'ry station,
Unite in common recreation;
Love blinks, Wit slaps, an' social Mirth
Forgets there 's Care upo' the earth.

The canty auld folks crackin' crouse,
The young anes rantin' thro' the house,—
My heart has been sae fain to see them,
That I for joy hae barkit wi' them."

Here in one line lies the gem ; here is genius. The elements have taken fire. That collie has a soul ; he is one of the family, as the collie always is in the home of the Scotch peasant. Every collie in the world has been elevated in social status since the pen of genius made him one of that joyous throng. He sings his song, speaks his piece, dances with the rest, and contributes his part to the general happiness. Talent would probably have forgotten him altogether. It could never have seen that the needed music to cap the joyous scene might be invoked out of his bark. No ; that is just the one step, the "little more" of Michael Angelo's definition of genius.

Two lines at the close of this poem call for notice. These hairy philosophers sitting on the heather hills have told each other much of the trials and disadvantages of life in the palace and in the cottage ; for there are advantages and disadvantages in both, though we have Marcus Aurelius's word for it, that "life can be lived well even in a palace." The sun had set, the gloaming was coming on—

" When up they gat, and shook their lugs,
Rejoic'd they were na men but dugs."

There is no use in enlarging upon that last line. The reader who does not feel it to be a stroke of genius can never be made to see it. But who can fail to feel it? The poem ends with it, and goes out in a blaze. The line crystallizes and passes into literature as one of its gems. Genius, nothing but genius.

Burns, like Milton, always betrays an extraordinary partiality for the devil. It would be difficult to illustrate genius better than by quoting several lines from his address to that wicked imp. One is tempted to quote several, but let us take the last verse only :

" But, fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben !
O wad ye tak a thought an' men' !
Ye aiblins might—I dinna ken—
Still hae a stake—
I 'm wae to think upo' yon den,
E'en for your sake !"

Talent, even of the highest order, would have stopped much short of such a farewell. It might have tendered some good advice, ponderously delivered. Genius alone could have suggested the possible repentance and reformation of the very spirit of evil ; and the suggestion is so delicately conveyed—nothing of the preacher, no denunciation, just a friendly word at parting. And so Burns takes leave of his Infernal Majesty lovingly, anxious for his future improvement and happiness. The poet would not do even Old Nick a bad turn ; he would do him a good turn if he could. The spark is in this line. The glow of sympathy becomes all-pervading, sympathy with misfortune in all its phases, and we feel that he "prayeth best who" not only "loveth best all things, both great and small," but all things, even evil things, loveth he so, that he prays their return to the better path.

The dying words of poor Maillie, the plowman's pet ewe, furnish several gems. The dying sheep gives advice to her lambs, and two lines inculcate a lesson at least as valuable as any other that can be given to lambs in the form of young men and women. For those who eschew bad company are safe.

“ But aye keep mind to moop an' mell
Wi' sheep o' credit like thyself ! ”

The address closes with the four following lines :

“ And now, my bairns, wi' my last breath,
I lea'e my blessing wi' you baith :
*An' when you think upo' your mither,
Mind to be kin' to ane anither.* ”

A sermon in two lines for every family in the world. If there be brothers and sisters at variance anywhere, who can withstand these lines and remain apart, Heaven help them ! Not the note, this, which sets fire to the blood ? But genius has another test not less searching than that of fire. The tear is also her own. The gracious drops from the fount of sorrow fall at her call. She alone strikes the hard heart with enchanted spear, and softens all into the sacred rain of tears.

In the “ Epistle to a Young Friend,” amidst much good advice, we come to a stanza that blazes in these days of higher criticism and patching of human creeds which have too long passed for divine :

“ *The fear o' hell 's a hangman's whip
To haud the wretch in order ;
But where ye feel your honor grip,
Let that aye be your border :
Its slightest touches, instant pause—
Debar a' side pretences ;
And resolutely keep its laws,
Uncaring consequences.* ”

This sentiment will meet with general acceptance to-day. That Burns dared write it in his day is explicable only by the law that genius does what it must.

Matthew Arnold says that for dramatic force equal to that displayed in “ Tam o' Shanter ” and “ The Jolly Beggars ” we must look in the pages of Shakspeare alone. The scene in Alloway Kirk, with witches and warlocks in a dance, would obviously have been incomplete without the presence of the head spirit of the fraternity himself. But what part would Old Nick play in such an entertainment ? To dance with the others would scarcely have comported with his regal dignity ; to stand apart would never do, for if there be any mischief afoot, he certainly must be in it. Goethe makes Mephistopheles draw the wine from the cask and put the sulphurous flame in it—a proper part, no doubt ; but these spirits of the air neither eat nor drink, yet the devil must do something among them. Here is the stroke of genius :

“ At winnock-bunker i’ the east,
 There sat Auld Nick, in shape o’ beast;
 A towzie tyke, black, grim, an’ large,
To gie them music was his charge;
 He screw’d the pipes and gart them skirl,
 Till roof and rafters a’ did dirl.”

He gets at the very core of the whole matter. Without music no dance was possible, and Nannie could never have “lapped and flang.” Those who dance must pay the piper; and when Auld Nick himself sets the tune, as he often does, the devil’s to pay indeed; his scale of charges knows no maximum, and he is a sure collector. The next lines have a weird touch which is hard indeed to equal. One line contains the searched-for spark:

“ Coffins stood round like open presses;
 That shaw’d the dead in their last dresses;
 And by some deev’lish cantraip slight
Each in its cauld hand held a light.”

The idea of ranging the dead in their coffins around the ball-room of these spirits of darkness in their orgy might possibly have occurred to a clever poet; but what of the last touch? The “little more” lies just here—the cold hand of corpses made to serve as candlesticks to light the revels! The element of the awful is thus introduced with appalling power. What a background for the picture! Mirth and revelry—life at its flood; the living ringed in and lighted up by the dead! Tam o’ Shanter has too many of the sparks to be quoted fully—the picture of Tam’s home at the farm, for instance, when he was reveling at night in Ayr:

“ Whare sits our sulky, sullen dame,
 Gath’rin’ her brows like gath’rin’ storm,
Nursin’ her wrath to keep it warm.”

The finger goes at once upon the last line. Burns knew the sex. Most wives are too good, sweet, tender, and self-sacrificing to do more than make-believe when they rebuke. Their wrath needs constant fuel, or down it all goes, perhaps too soon.

In all that Burns has written there is nothing finer than “The Vision.” He paints himself sitting in his hovel at night, the very den of poverty—an “auld clay biggin” filled with tormenting smoke. At last he falls asleep, and the “Genius of Scotland” comes to him in a dream. From beginning to end this is a poem filled with the brightest gems, rich in the divine sparks of genius. Mark the description of Scotia’s Guardian Angel, who presides over the inspired natures who have made that little land one of the largest domains in the realm of the spirit, and the home of Poetry, Romance, and Song.

“The Vision” tells him to “preserve the dignity of man with soul erect,” and then follows the close. The highest test of the poet is the manner in which he touches the supernatural.

Men may easily call spirits from the vasty deep, but how to use them so that we preserve our gravity is known to few. Very few men, it is said, know how to take their departure from a room becomingly. It has troubled many a writer how to dispose of his supernatural visitor, and prevent "exit ghost" being followed by peals of laughter. What genius can do is seen in Hamlet's "Remember me" as he noiselessly glides away. Banquo's exit with finger pointing to bloody throat is magnificent. True sparks indeed, especially the latter; but even with that may we not rank this departure of "The Vision"?

"And wear thou this,"—she solemn said
And bound the holly round my head:
The polished leaves, and berries red,
Did rustling play;
*And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away."*

How could that peasant plowman in his smoky den ever conceive anything so exquisitely delicate as this ending! I know nothing of the kind so perfect. One fondly lingers over—

"And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away."

Two words, but a Koh-i-noor. Genius! Inspiration!

There is something splendid in this poor plowman greeting himself, as a matter of course, as the inspired bard and placing the holly upon his own royal head. Supreme genius does know its powers and its heritage. Burns was indeed the Bard of Scotland and the rightful king. No man has risen to dispute his title to the crown. The holly still remains there, its leaves greener and its berries redder to-day than when bound around his head.

The address to the mouse has been often quoted, but not the lines which to me contain the purest spark. Take the second stanza:

"I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
*At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal!"*

Here is Darwinism for you. Talent could never have reached down so far as to become "fellow-mortal" to a mouse. Or if it might have condescendingly done this much, it never could have elevated the poor little mouse to companionship with man. It took genius to divine and so to announce in this fashion that "all flesh is kin."

Here is an epitaph upon his friend and benefactor, Gavin Hamilton, from whom President Arthur was proud to claim descent. I remember he corrected me one day when I spoke of Gavin Hamilton. "Not Gavin Hamilton," said he. "You ought to know better. He was one of my ancestors, and it was always Gavin with my grandfather."

"The poor man weeps—here Gavin sleeps,
Whom canting wretches blam'd;
*But with such as he—where'er he be,
May I be sav'd or damn'd!*"

We all know those in this world with whom we should be willing to take our chances in the next, now that Burns has put the idea into our heads; but who else would have gone so far as to print it for the first time?

We have not yet touched upon his songs. Take Bruce's Address, which Carlyle has called "the war-hymn of the ages." "The first stanza of 'Scots wha hae,'" said mediocrity, in the person of Thompson, the publisher, "will never do; no leader would dare offer as an alternative to victory a gory bed to troops he wished to encourage." Death has been hailed, but death seems vague in comparison, and carries with it the suggestion of immediate passage to the abode of heroes. But Burns knew better than his critic, and replied: "That line must stand." And it stands for all time.

"Welcome to your gory bed
Or to victory."

"Scotland's right" or the "gory bed," the last welcome if the first fell. He stood for Scotland, body and soul, future or no future, Walhalla or Annihilation—it mattered not. At that supreme moment it was "Scotland forever!"

In that well-known song, "John Anderson, my jo," we have the spark. Has any poet ever given in one verse such a picture of the union of two hearts as this?

"Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go;
*And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.*"

Up the hill, down the hill, through life, through death; "until death us do part" is the vow of marriage; but when true marriage comes, death itself forces no separation. Through the dark shadow hand in hand,—and this much for comfort and content,—we shall "sleep thegither at the foot," certain as we lie down that there can be no heaven for one without the other, and prepared for anything in the future so we share it together.

"To Mary in Heaven" seems not only so perfect, but so sacred that one instinctively hesitates to quote from it. It is the ideal lover's lament as clearly as "Scots wha hae" is the war song, or "Auld Lang Syne" the song of good fellowship, or "A man's a man for a' that" the song of democracy. But four lines I must quote, which follow the description of the meeting on the banks of Ayr, which, "gurgling, kissed its pebbled shore":

"Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care!
*Time but th' impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.*"

What Burns might have been had Mary lived to be his wife opens the field of boundless conjecture. The history of this incomparable lament is fittingly touching. His wife tells that the poet not coming in at the usual evening hour she went in search of him, and found him lying on his back on a hayrick gazing at the evening star, so absorbed that she did not disturb him. He came in later, and going to his table, took pen and wrote this lament. The rapid change of mood in Burns has given rise to much surprise. Scott's devotion to his first love, whose sacred name he was discovered carving in Runic characters when he was an old man, tells the tale in his case. This is contrasted with the succession of favorites of Burns; but he too, though he sighed to many, loved but one. How sorry one is for the woman who was his wife: in the heart of her husband another sits enthroned. And what a line is that first one of the lament—six words of exquisite beauty, and such rhythm, shedding around the kindly light of genius:

*"Thou ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn."*

Truly, "Who says he has loved has never loved at all."

And here comes "Holy Willie's Prayer." But this is no spark, the torch of genius illuminates every verse. We cannot pass it over altogether, and we might as well take the first stanza as any other:

*"O thou, wha in the heavens does dwell,
Wha, as it pleases best thyself,
Sends ane to heaven, and ten to hell,
A' for thy glory,
And no for ony guid or ill
They've done afore thee!"*

In the "Twa Herds" there is the spark—

*"Then Orthodoxy yet may prance,
And Learning in a woodie dance,
And that fell cur ca'd Common Sense,
That bites sae sair,
Be banished o'er the sea to France:
Let him bark there."*

Common sense does bite indeed!

Matthew Arnold declares the "Jolly Beggars" the greatest work of Burns. Shakspeare alone, says he, has equaled it for dramatic force. It is the veteran's turn to amuse the old tatterdemalions, and he gives them a rollicking song indeed.

*"I lastly was with Curtis, among the floating batt'ries,
And there I left for witness an arm and a limb,
Yet let my country need me, with Elliot to lead me,
I'd c'atter on my stumps at the sound of a drum."*

The one line again. If there be in literature such a picture as that suggested by the last line, I have not met with it. Did



MRS. THOS. BROWN,
GRANDDAUGHTER OF ROBERT BURNS.



Burns painfully think that out? Muse over it? Labor away at that part or this part of it? Or did the idea flash upon him like a stroke of lightning, and reveal that veteran moved to dancing upon his stumps at the very sound of the drum? I believe it burst upon the poet at once, and that he was afraid he might lose the flash before he could write it down. But we must pass to the closing song which is sung as an encore by the bard of the gang, after which the curtain falls. The first and last verses I quote :

“ See ! the smoking bowl before us,
Mark our jovial ragged ring !
Round and round take up the chorus,
And in raptures let us sing.

CHORUS.—“ *A fig for those by law protected !
Liberty 's a glorious feast !
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest.*”

* * * * *

“ Life is all a variorum,
We regard not how it goes :
Let them cant about decorum
Who have characters to lose.

“ Here 's to budgets, bags, and wallets !
Here 's to all the wandering train !
Here 's our ragged brats and callets !
One and all cry out—Amen.”

There is an amen chorus for you ! The most gloriously wild rant in literature, as far as I know it, is this cantata. No wonder it was not published until after the death of the poet. If any man ever lived but Burns who could have written it, I have not heard of him. If he never had written anything else but this, he could never have been ignored as a poet.

In the next we strike my favorite of all songs. I confess that with songs and tunes I am as fickle as Burns was with his favorite lassies ; one queen gives place to another with surprising facility. Every summer spent on the moors among the heather brings a new favorite. But there also comes a loyal return to a former love now and then ; one that has reigned before and been dethroned for a time is restored and reigns again. Though not hereditary monarchs, these queens are eligible for reëlection. Thus “ My Nannie 's Awa ” has served more terms than any, and is now again in the high office of Queen of Song. It is a shame to quote only a part of it, because every line seems a necessary step leading higher and higher until the region of fire is entered ; but two verses must be singled out from this prime favorite of the hour, as the highest crests where all is mountainous.

“ The snaw-drop and primrose our woodlands adorn,
And violets bathe in the weet o' the morn ;
They pain my sad bosom, sae sweetly they blaw,
Thy mind me o' Nannie—and Nannie 's awa' !

“ The lav’rock that springs frae the dew’s of the lawn,
 The shepherd to warn o’ the grey-breaking dawn,
 And thou, mellow mavis, that hails the night fa’,
Give over for pity—my Nannie ’s awa’ !”

Lying open before me on the opposite page comes the hymn of Triumphant Democracy :

“ *The rank is but the guinea-stamp,
 The man ’s the gold for a’ that !”*

The last verse sends that hymn singing throughout the world—

“ Then let us pray that come it may—
 As come it will for a’ that—
 That sense and worth, o’er a’ the earth,
 May bear the gree, and a’ that.

For a’ that, and a’ that,
*It ’s comin’ yet, for a’ that,
 That man to man, the world o’er,
 Shall brothers be for a’ that !”*

This was before Tennyson sang of the Parliament of Man and the Federation of the World. Burns, with the true insight of the poet-prophet, proclaims the brotherhood of man.

I cannot leave my favorite in an attitude more pleasing than in singing the coming Brotherhood of Man.

Whether these pages ever see the light or no, they have served their purpose, for many a weary anxious hour has the search for gems saved the writer, bringing to him something like calm, and once more “ the taste of elevated joys,” which comes to the tranquil mind.

LORD ROSEBERY'S SPEECHES AT DUMFRIES
AND GLASGOW, JULY 21, 1896, ON THE OC-
CASION OF THE BURNS' CENTENARY CELE-
BRATION.

(*By Special Permission.*)

ROBERT BURNS: Scotland's best loved son and her patriot bard was born at Alloway, on 25th January, 1759, and died on 21st July, 1796. A brief thirty-seven years, yet how much was crowded into their little span. Joys and sorrows, triumphs and disappointments, the consciousness of Heaven-given genius, the keen pangs of remorseful memories, yet all these were needed to evoke that storm of feeling which has made him not only the hero of Scottish hearts, but the very sign and symbol of Scottish patriotism. Little wonder then that the Centenary of the death of Robert Burns should have elicited a display of pride and affection unequalled in the annals of any country under the sun. For one day Scottish reserve departed, as from every part of the globe came testimonies and tributes to the memory of Robert Burns.

*At the Luncheon in the Mechanics' Hall, Dumfries, Lord Rose-
bery Delivered the Following Address.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I come here as a loyal burghess of Dumfries to do honor to the greatest burghess of Dumfries. You, Mr. Provost, have laid upon me a great distinction, but a great burden. Your most illustrious burghess obtained privileges for his children in respect to his burghess-ship, but you impose on your youngest burghess an honor that might well break anybody's back—that of attempting to do justice in any shape or fashion to the hero of to-day's ceremony. Well, we citizens of Dumfries have a special claim to be considered on this day. We are surrounded by the choicest and the most sacred haunts of the poet. You have in your town the house in which he died, the Globe, where we could have wished that some phonograph had then existed which could have communicated to us some of his wise and witty and wayward talk. You have the street commemorated in M'Culloch's tragical anecdote when Burns was shunned by his former friends; and you have the paths by the Nith

which are associated with some of his greatest works. You have near you the room in which "the whistle" was contested for, and in which, if some legend is to be trusted, the immortal Dr. Gregory was summoned to administer his first powders to the survivors of that memorable feast. You have the stack-yard in which, lying on his back and contemplating

Thou ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,

he wrote the lines "To Mary in Heaven," perhaps the most pathetic of his poems. You have near you the walk by the river where, in his transport, he passed his wife and children without seeing them, his brow flushed and his eyes shining with the lustre of "Tam o' Shanter." "I wish you had seen him," said his wife, "he was in such ecstasy that the tears were happing down his cheeks." That is why we are in Dumfries to-day; we come to honour Burns among these immortal haunts of his. But it is not in Dumfries alone that he is commemorated to-day, for all Scotland will pay her tribute, and that is surely hers of right. Mankind owes him a general debt, but the debt of Scotland is a special one, for Burns exalted our race; he hallowed Scotland and the Scottish tongue. Before his time we had been scrcely recognized. We had been passing out of the recollection and recognition of the world. From the time of the Union of the Crowns, and still more from the time of the legislative union, Scotland had lapsed into obscurity. Except for an occasional riot or a Jacobite rising, her existence was almost forgotten. She had indeed her Robertsons and her Humes, writing history to general admiration, but no trace of Scottish authorship was discoverable in their works; indeed, every flavour of national idiom was carefully obliterated. The Scottish dialect, as Burns called it, was in danger of extinction; and Burns seemed at this juncture to start to his feet and reassert Scotland's claim to a national existence. His Scottish notes rang through the world; he preserved the Scottish language forever—for mankind will never allow to die that idiom in which his poems and his songs are enshrined. This is a part and only a part of Scotland's debt to Burns. But it is much more than a Scottish demonstration, and therefore I will not linger longer on Scotland's debt. It is a collection of representatives from all quarters of the globe to own the common allegiance and the common faith. It is not only Scotsmen honouring the greatest of Scotsmen—we are stretched to-day far beyond a kingdom or a race. We are a sort of poetical Mohammedans gathered in a sort of poetical Mecca. And yet, ladies and gentlemen, we are assembled to-day in our high enthusiasm under circumstances which are somewhat paradoxical, for with all the appearance of joy we celebrate not a festival but a tragedy. It is not the sunrise but the sunset that we commem-

orate. It is not the birth of a new power into the world, the subtle germ of a fame that is to survive and to inspire the generations of men. But it is perhaps more fitting that we celebrate the end and not the beginning. For the coming of these figures is silent. It is their passing that we note. At this instant that I speak, there may be born into the world the equal of a Newton or a Cæsar, but half of us will be dead before he has revealed himself. Their death is different. It may be gloomy and disastrous; it may come at a moment of shame and neglect. But by their time the man has carved his name somewhere in the temple of fame. There are exceptions, of course, exceptions where the end comes before the slightest or all but the slightest recognition—Chatterton choking in his garret; hunger of body and soul all unsatisfied; Millet selling his pictures for a song; nay Shakespeare himself. But as a rule death in the case of genius closes the first act of a public drama. Criticism and honours may then begin their unbiassed work free from jealousy or friendship or personal consideration for the beginning. Then comes the third act, if a third act there be. No, it is a death, not a birth, that we celebrate to-day. This day a century ago, in poverty, and delirium, and distress there was passing the soul of Robert Burns. To him death comes in clouds and darkness—the end of a long agony of body and soul. He is harassed with debt; his bodily constitution is ruined; his spirit is broken; his wife is daily expecting her confinement; he has lost almost all that rendered his life happy, much of friendship, credit, and esteem. Some score of years before, one of the most charming of English writers, as he lay dying, was asked if his mind was at ease, and with his last breath Oliver Goldsmith owned that it was not. So it was with Robert Burns. His delirium dwelt on the horrors of a jail. He uttered curses on the tradesmen who had pursued him for debt. “What business” said he to his physician, in a moment of consciousness, “what business has a physician to waste his time on me? I am a poor pigeon not worth plucking. Alas! I have not feathers enough on me to carry me to my grave.” For a year or more his health had been failing. For he had a poet’s body as well as a poet’s mind—nervous, feverish, and impressionable; and his constitution, which, if nurtured and regulated might have carried him to the limit of life, was undermined by the storm and stress of his disappointment and a preying mind. In the previous autumn he had been seized with a rheumatic attack. His digestion had given way. He was sinking in melancholy and gloom. In his last April he wrote to his friend Thomson—“By Babel’s streams I have sat and wept almost ever since I saw you last. I have only known existence by the pressure of the heavy hand of sickness, and have counted time by the repercussions of pain. Rheumatism, cold, and fever have formed to me a terrible combination. I close my eyes in misery and open them

without hope." It was thought to revive him by sea-bathing, and he was sent to the Brow Well. There he remained for three weeks. He was under no delusion as to his state. "Well, madam," he said to Mrs. Riddell, on arriving, "have you any commands for the other world?" He sat that evening with his old friend and spoke manfully of his approaching death, of the fate of his children, and his fame, sometimes indulging in bitter-sweet pleasantry, but never losing the consciousness of his condition. After three weeks he wearied of the fruitless hunt for death, and he returned home to die. He was only just in time. When he reached his house on the eighteenth he could no longer stand. He was soon delirious; in three days he was dead. On the fourth day we are told that his attendant held a cordial to his lips. He swallowed it greedily, raised himself almost wholly up, spread out his hands, sprang forward, nigh the whole length of the bed, fell on his face and expired. I suppose there are many who can read the account of these last months with composure. They are more fortunate than I. There is nothing much more melancholy in all biography. The brilliant poet, the delight of all society, from the highest to the lowest, sits brooding in silence over the drama of his spent life—the unseen home, the plough and the savour of fresh-turned earth, the silent communion with Nature and his own heart, the brief hours of splendour, the dark hour of anguish, the mad struggle for forgetfulness, the bitterness of vanished homage, the gnawing doubt of failure, the distressing future of his wife and children, the endless witch dance without clue or remedy—all preplexing, all soon to end while he is yet young, as men count youth. Though none know so well as he that his youth is gone, his race is run, his message is fulfilled. His death revived the flagging interest which had been felt in him. As usual, men began to realize what they had lost when it was too late. When it was known that he was dying, his townsmen had shewn great anxiety and distress. One man was heard to say with a touch of quaint simplicity, "Who do you think will be our poet now?" The district set itself to prepare a public funeral for the poet who had died almost penniless among them; a vast concourse followed him to his grave; the "awkward squad," as he had foreseen and deprecated, fired a volley over his grave; the streets were lined with soldiers, and among them one who sixteen years later was to be Prime Minister; and while the procession wended its gloomy way, as if no element of tragedy were to be awaiting to the scene, his widow's hour of travail arose, and she gave birth to the hapless child who had caused his father so much misgiving. In this place and on this day it all seems present to us—the house of anguish, the thronged churchyard, the weeping mourners. We feel ourselves part of the lamenting crowd; we hear those dropping volleys and that muffled drum. We bow our heads as the coffin passes and acknowledge with tears the inevitable doom. Pass.

heavy hearse, with thy weary freight of shattered hopes and exhausted frame; pass with that simple pomp of fatherless bairns and sad moralising friends; pass with the sting of death to the victory of the grave; pass with the perishable and leave us the eternal. It is rare to be fortunate in life; it is infinitely rarer to be fortunate in death. Happy in the occasion of his death, as Tacitus says of Agricola, is not a common epitaph. It is comparatively easy to know how to live, but it is beyond all option and choice to compass the more difficult art of knowing how and when to die. We can generally, in looking back, choose a moment in a man's life when he had been fortunate if he had dropped down dead. And so the question arises naturally to-day, was Burns fortunate in his death—the death which we commemorate? There can, I fancy, be only one answer. It was well that he died when he did. It might even have been better for himself if he had died a little earlier. The terrible lines that he wrote two years earlier to Mrs. Riddell and Mr. Cunningham betoken a spirit mortally wounded. In those last two years the cloud settles never to be lifted. "My constitution and frame," he says, "were aboriginally blasted with the deep incurable taint of hypochondria, which poisons my existence." He found, perhaps, some pleasure in the composition of his songs, some occasional relief in the society of boon companions; but the world was fading before him. There is an awful expression in Scotland, which one never hears without a pang—Such and such a one "is done," meaning that he is physically worn out. Burns was "done." He was struggling on like a poor wounded deer to his grave. He had often faced the end not unwillingly. "Can it be possible," he once wrote to Mrs. Dunlop, "that when I resign this frail, feverish being, I shall find myself in conscious existence? When the last gasp of agony has announced that I am no more to those who know me and the few who love me; when the cold, unconscious corpse is resigned to the earth, to be the prey of reptiles and become a trodden clod, shall I yet be warm in life, enjoying or enjoyed?" Surely that reads as if he foresaw our meeting here to-day and would fain be with us. And, indeed, for all we know he may be. Twelve years before he had faced death in a less morbid spirit. Why, he asked—

Why am I loath to leave this earthly scene?

Have I so found it full of pleasing charms?

Some drops of joy, with draughts of ill between,

Some gleams of sunshine 'mid renewing storms!

He had perhaps never enjoyed life so much as is generally supposed, though he had turned to it a brave, cheerful, unflinching face; and his last years had been years of misery. "God have mercy on me," he wrote, years before the end, "a poor, damned, uncautious, duped, unfortunate fool: the sport and miserable victim of rebellious pride, hypochondriac imagination, and Bedlam passions!" There was truth in this out-

burst; at any rate his most devoted friends—and to be an admirer of Burns is to be his friend—at any rate his most devoted friends might wish that he had not lived to write the letter to Mr. Clark, piteously pleading that a harmless toast might not be visited too hard upon him; or that to Mrs. Riddell: “I write you from the regions of hell and the terrors of the damned;” or to be harried as a political suspect by his official superiors and shunned by his acquaintances for the same reason—walking like a ghost in Dumfries, neglected and ignored. “That’s all over now, my young friend,” he said, referring to the attitude towards him of Dumfries society—“Were not my heart light I would dee.” That was in 1794. Had he died then it might have been happier for himself; and we might have lost some parts of his life that we would rather forget. But posterity could not have spared him. We could not have spared the songs which belong to these years; and above all, that supreme creed which he bequeathed to the world—“A man’s a man for a’ that,” would have remained undelivered. One might, perhaps, go further and say that—piteous as it is—whom the gods love should die young. This is a hard saying, but it will not greatly affect the bills of mortality—and it applies only to poets of the first rank, while even here it has its exceptions, and illustrious exceptions they have been. But surely the best poetry is produced before middle age—before the morning and its illusions have faded, before the heaviness of noon and the baneful chill of evening. Few men can bear the strain of a poet’s temperament through many years. At any rate, we may feel sure of this, that Burns had produced his best—that he could never again have produced a “Tam o’ Shanter,” or a “Cottar’s Saturday Night,” or a “Jolly Beggars.” And though long before his death he could still write lines affluent with tenderness and grace, the hand of pain and hate and care, to use his own words, had lain heavily upon him. And this leads to another point. To-day is not merely the melancholy anniversary of death, but the real and incomparable fulfilment of prophecy. For this is the moment to which Burns looked forward when he said to his wife “Don’t be afraid. I’ll be more respected a hundred years after I am dead than I am at present.” To-day the hundred years are completed and we can judge of the prediction. On that point we must all be unanimous. Burns had honor in his life-time, but his fame has rolled like a snow-ball since his death, and it rolls on yet. There is indeed no parallel to it in the world. It sets the calculations of compound interest at defiance. It is not merely the watchword of a nation that carries and implants Burns worship all over the globe as birds carry seeds, but he has become the champion and the patron saint of democracy—he bears aloft the banner of the essential equality of man. His birthday is celebrated a hundred and thirty-seven years after its occurrence more universally than that of any other human

being. He reigns over a greater dominion than any empire that the world has ever seen. Neither does the ardor of his devotees decrease. Ellisland, Mauchline and Dumfries are still shrines of countless pilgrims. Burns statues are a hardy annual. Burns clubs spring up like mushrooms after rain. The editions of Burns are as the sands of the sea. The production of Burns manuscripts was a lucrative branch of industry until it was checked by the untimely interference of the law. No canonized name in the calendar excites such blind and enthusiastic adoration. Whatever Burns may have contemplated in the most daring flight of his imagination, whatever dream he may have fondled in the wildest moments of his elation, must have fallen utterly short of the reality, as we know it to-day. And it is all spontaneous. There is no puff, no advertisement, no manipulation. Intellectual cosmetics of that kind are frail and fugitive. They rarely survive their subject—they would not have availed here. Nor is there any special glamor attached to the poet—rather the reverse. He stood by himself, he has grown by himself, it is himself and no other that we honor. But what had Burns in his mind when he made his prediction? It might be whimsically urged that he was conscious that the world had not yet seen his master-piece, for the “Jolly Beggars” was not published until some time after his death. But that would not have been sufficient, for he had probably forgotten its existence. Nor do I think he spoke at haphazard. What was probably present to his mind were the fickleness of his contemporaries towards him, his conviction of the essential excellence of his work, the consciousness that the excesses of his later years had unjustly obscured him, and that his true figure would be preserved as these fell into forgetfulness, or were measured by their true value. If so, he was right in his judgment, for his true life began with his death. With the poet passed all that was gross or impure; the clear spirit stood revealed, and soared at once to its accepted place among the fixed stars in the firmament of the rare immortals.

Lord Rosebery then resumed his seat amid loud cheering.

LORD ROSEBERY AT GLASGOW.

At a Public Meeting in the evening in St. Andrew's Halls, Glasgow, Lord Rosebery delivered the following address.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: It is a great pleasure to find myself in this hall on a non-political occasion. We are here to-day to celebrate Burns. What the direct connection of Burns with Glasgow is, I am not exactly sure; but, at any rate, I am confident of this, that in the great metropolis of the West, there is a clear claim that we should celebrate the genius of Robert Burns. I have celebrated it already elsewhere. I cannot, perhaps, deny that the day has been a day of labor, but it has been a labor of

love. It is, and it must be, a source of joy and pride to us to see our champion Scotsman receive the honor and admiration and affection of humanity; to see, as I have seen this morning, the long processions bringing homage and tribute to the conquering dead. But these have only been signs and symptoms of the world-wide passion of reverence and devotion. That generous and immortal soul pervades the universe to-day. In the humming city and in the crowd of man; in the backwood and in the swamp; where the sentinel paces the bleak frontier, and where the sailor smokes his evening pipe; and, above all, where the farmer and his men pursue their summer toil, whether under the Stars and Stripes or under the Union Jack—the thought and sympathy of men are directed to Robert Burns. I have sometimes asked myself if a roll-call of fame were read over at the beginning of every century, how many men of eminence would answer a second time to their names. But of our poet there is no doubt or question. The “adsum” of Burns rings out clear and unchallenged. There are few before him on the list, and we cannot now conceive a list without him. He towers high, and yet he lived in an age when the average was sublime. It sometimes seems to me as if the whole eighteenth century was a constant preparation for, a constant working up to, the great drama of the revolution which closed it. The scenery is all complete when the time arrives—the dark, volcanic country; the hungry, desperate people; the fire-fly nobles; the concentrated splendour of the court; in the midst, in her place as heroine, the dazzling Queen. And during long previous years, brooding nature has been producing not merely the immediate actors, but figures worthy of the scene. What a glittering procession it is! We can only mark some of the principal figures. Burke leads the way by seniority; then come Fox and Goethe; Nelson and Mozart; Schiller, Pitt, and Burns; Wellington and Napoleon. And among these Titans, Burns is a conspicuous figure; the figure which appeals most of all to the imagination and affection of mankind. Napoleon perhaps looms larger to the imagination, but on the affection he has no hold. It is in the combination of the two powers that Burns is supreme. What is his secret? We are always discussing him and endeavouring to find it out. Perhaps, like the latent virtue of some medical baths, it may never be satisfactorily explained. But, at any rate, let us discuss him again. That is, I presume, our object to-night. What pleasanter or more familiar occupation can there be for Scotsmen? But the Scotsmen who enjoy it have generally perhaps more time than I. Pardon then the imperfections of my speech, for I speak of a subject which no man can altogether compass, and which a busy man has perhaps no right to attempt. The clue to Burns’s extraordinary hold on mankind is possibly a complicated one; it has, perhaps, many developments. If so, we have not time to consider it to-night. But

I personally believe the causes are, like most great causes, simple; though it might take long to point out all the ways in which they operate. The secret, as it seems to me, lies in two words—inspiration and sympathy. But, if I wished to prove my contention, I should go on quoting from his poems all night, and his admirers would still declare that I had omitted the best passages. I know that profuse quotation is a familiar form of a Burns speech, but I am afraid to begin lest I should not end, and I am sure I should not satisfy. I must proceed, then, in a more summary way. Now, ladies and gentlemen, there seems to me to be two great natural forces in British literature—I use the safe adjective of British. I use it partly because hardly any of Burns's poetry is strictly English, partly because he hated and was, perhaps, the first to protest against the use of the word English as including Scottish—well, I say, there are in that literature two great forces of which the power seems sheer inspiration and nothing else—I mean Shakespeare and Burns. This is not the place or the time to speak of that miracle called Shakespeare, but one must say a word of the miracle called Burns. Try and reconstruct Burns as he was. A peasant, born in a cottage that no sanitary inspector in these days would tolerate for a moment—struggling with desperate effort against pauperism almost in vain; snatching at scraps of learning in the intervals of toil, as it were with his teeth; a heavy, silent lad, proud of his ploughing. All of a sudden, without preface or warning, he breaks out into exquisite song like a nightingale from the brushwood, and continues singing as sweetly, with nightingale pauses, till he dies. A nightingale sings because he cannot help it; he can only sing exquisitely because he knows no other. So it was with Burns. What is this but inspiration? One can no more measure or reason about it than measure or reason about Niagara. And remember, ladies and gentlemen, the poetry is only a fragment of Burns. Amazing as it may seem, all contemporary testimony is unanimous that the man was far more wonderful than his works. "It will be the misfortune of Burns' reputation," writes an accomplished lady, who might well have judged him harshly, "in the records of literature, not only to future generations and to foreign countries, but even with his native Scotland and a number of his contemporaries, that he has been regarded as a poet and nothing but a poet. * * * Poetry," she continues, "(I appeal to all who had the advantage of being personally acquainted with him) was actually not his *forte*. * * * None, certainly, ever outshone Burns in the charms—the sorcery I would almost call it—of fascinating conversation, the spontaneous eloquence of social argument, or the unstudied poignancy of brilliant repartee." And she goes on to describe the almost superhuman fascination of his voice and of his eyes, those balls of black fire which electrified all on whom they rested. It seems strange to be told that it would be an

injustice to judge Burns by his poetry alone; but as to the magnetism of his presence and conversation there is only one verdict. "No man's conversation ever carried me so completely off my feet," said the Duchess of Gordon—the friend of Pitt and of the London wits, the queen of Scottish society. Dugald Stewart says that "all the faculties of Burns' mind were, so far as I could judge, equally vigorous, and his predilection for poetry was rather the result of his own enthusiastic and impassioned temper, than of a genius exclusively adapted to that species of composition. From his conversation I should have pronounced him to be fitted to excel in whatever walk of ambition he had chosen to exert his abilities." And of his prose compositions the same severe judge speaks thus: "Their great and varied excellencies render some of them scarcely less objects of wonder than his poetical performances." The late Dr. Robertson used to say that, "considering his education, the former seemed to him the more remarkable of the two." "I think Burns," said Principal Robertson to a friend, "was one of the most extraordinary men I ever met with. His poetry surprised me very much, his prose surprised me still more, and his conversation surprised me more than both his poetry and prose." We are told, too, that "he felt a strong call towards oratory, and all who heard him speak—and some of them were excellent judges—admitted his wonderful quickness of apprehension and readiness of eloquence." All this seems to me marvellous. It surely ratifies the claim of inspiration without the necessity of quoting a line of his poetry. I pass then to his sympathy. If his talents were universal his sympathy was not less so. His tenderness was not a mere selfish tenderness for his own family, for he loved all mankind except the cruel and the base. Nay, we may go further and say that he placed all creation, especially the suffering and despised part of it, under his protection. The oppressor in every shape, even in the comparatively innocent embodiment of the factor and the sportsman, he regarded with direct and personal hostility. But above all he saw the charm of the home; he recognized it as the basis of all society, he honored it in its humblest form, for he knew, as few know, how unpretentiously, but how sincerely, the family in the cottage is welded by mutual love and esteem. "I recollect once," said Dugald Stewart, speaking of Burns, "he told me, when I was admiring a distant prospect in one of our morning walks, that the sight of so many smoking cottages gave a pleasure to his mind which none could understand, who had not witnessed, like himself, the happiness and worth which they contained." He dwells repeatedly on the primary sacredness of the home and the family, the responsibility of fatherhood and marriage. "Have I not," he once wrote to Lord Mar, "a more precious stake in my country's welfare than the richest dukedom in it? I have a large family of children and the prospect of many more."

The lines in which he tells his faith are not less memorable than the stately stanzas in which Gray sings the "short and simple annals of the poor." I must quote them again, often quoted as they are :

To mak' a happy fireside clime
To weans and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life.

His verses then go straight to the heart of every home ; they appeal to every father and mother. But that is only the beginning, perhaps the foundation, of his sympathy. There is something for everybody in Burns. He has a heart even for vermin ; he has pity even for the arch-enemy of mankind. And his universality makes his poems a treasure-house in which all may find what they want. Every wayfarer in the journey of life may pluck strength and courage from it as he passes. The sore, the weary, the wounded, will all find something to heal and soothe. For this great master is the universal Samaritan. Where the priest and the Levite may have passed by in vain, this eternal heart will still afford a resource. But he is not only for the sick in spirit. The friend, the lover, the patriot, will all find their choicest refreshment in Burns. His touch is everywhere, and it is everywhere the touch of genius. Nothing comes amiss to him. What was said of the debating power of his eminent contemporary, Dundas, may be said of his poetry—"He went out in all weathers." And it may be added that all weathers suited him ; that he always brought something precious, something we cherish, something that cannot die. He is, then, I think, the universal friend in an unique sense. But he was, poetically speaking, the special friend of Scotland, in a sense which recalls a profound remark of another eminent Scotsman, I mean Fletcher of Saltoun. In an account of a conversation between Lord Cromarty, Sir Edward Seymour, and Sir Christopher Musgrave, Fletcher writes : "I said I knew a very wise man, so much of Sir Christopher's sentiment, that he believed if a man were permitted to make all the ballads he need not care who should make the laws of a nation." This may be rudely paraphrased, that it is more important to make the songs of a nation than to frame its laws, and this again may be interpreted that in former days, at any rate in the days of Fletcher, even to the days of Burns, it is the familiar songs of a people that mould their thoughts, their manners, and their morals. If this be true can we exaggerate the debt that we Scotsmen owe to Burns? He has bequeathed to his country the most exquisite casket of songs in the world—primarily to his country, but others cannot be denied their share. I will give only one example, but that is a signal one. From distant Roumania the Queen of that country wrote to Dumfries to-day—that she has no copy of Burns with her, but that she knows his songs by heart. We must remember that there is more than this to be

said. Many of Burns' songs were already in existence in the lips and minds of the people—rough and coarse and obscene. Our benefactor takes them, and with a touch of inspired alchemy transmutes them and leaves them pure gold. He loved the old catches and the old tunes and into these gracious moulds he poured his exquisite gifts of thought and expression. But for him those ancient airs, often wedded to words which no decent man could recite, would have perished from that corruption if not from neglect. He rescued them for us by his songs, and in doing so he hallowed the life and sweetened the breath of Scotland. I have also used the words patriot and lover. These draw me to different lines of thought. The word "patriot" leads me to the political side of Burns. There is no doubt he was suspected of being a politician—and he is even said to have sometimes wished to enter Parliament. That was perhaps an excusable aberration, and my old friend Professor Masson has, I think, surmised that had he lived he might have been a great Liberal pressman. My frail thought shall not dally with such surmise, but it conducts us naturally to the subject of Burns's politics. From his sympathy for his own class, from his indignation against nobles like the Duke of Queensberry, and from the toasts that cost him so dear, it might be considered easy to infer his political opinions. But Burns should not be claimed for any party. A poet, be it remembered, is never a politician, and a politician is never a poet—that is to say, that a politician is never so fortunate as to be a poet, and a poet is so fortunate as never to be a politician. I do not say that the line of demarcation is never passed—a politician may have risen for a moment, or a poet may have descended, but where there is any confusion between the two callings, it is generally because the poet thinks he discerns, or the politician thinks he needs, something higher than politics. Burns's politics were entirely governed by the imagination. He was at once a Jacobite and a Jacobin. He had the sad sympathy which most of us have felt for the hapless house of Stuart, without the least wish to be governed by it. He had much the same sort of abstract sympathy with the French Revolution, when it was setting all Europe to rights; but he was prepared to lay down his life to prevent its putting this island to rights. And then came his official superiors of the Excise, who, notwithstanding Mr. Pitt's admiration of his poetry, snuffed out his politics without remorse. The name of Pitt leads me to add that Burns had some sort of relation with three prime ministers. Colonel Jenkinson of the Cinque Ports Fencible Cavalry—afterwards minister for fifteen years under the title of Liverpool—was on duty at Burns's funeral, though we are told—the good man—that he disapproved of the poet, and declined to make his acquaintance. Pitt, again, passed on Burns one of his rare and competent literary judgments, so eulogistic, indeed, that one wonders that a powerful minister

could have allowed one whom he admired so much to exist on an exciseman's pay when well, and an exciseman's half pay when dying. And from Addington, another prime minister, Burns elicited a sonnet, which, in the Academy of Lagado, would surely have been held a signal triumph of the art of extracting sunshine from cucumbers. So much for politics in the party sense. "A man's a man for a' that" is not politics, it is the assertion of the rights of humanity in a sense far wider than politics. It erects all mankind, it is the charter of its self-respect. It binds, it heals, it revives, it invigorates; it sets the bruised and broken on their legs, it refreshes the stricken soul, it is the salve and tonic of character; it cannot be narrowed into politics. Burns's politics are indeed nothing but the occasional overflow of his human sympathy into past history and current events. And now, having discussed the two trains of thought suggested by the words "friend" and "patriot," I come to the more dangerous word "lover." There is an eternal controversy which, it appears, no didactic oil will ever assuage, as to Burns's private life and morality. Some maintain that these have nothing to do with his poems; some maintain that his life must be read into his works, and here again some think that his life damns his poems, while others aver that his poems cannot be fully appreciated without his life. Another school thinks that his vices have been exaggerated, while their opponents scarcely think such exaggeration possible. It is impossible to avoid taking a side. I walk on the ashes knowing the fire beneath, and unable to avoid them, for the topic is inevitable. I must confess myself, then, one of those who think that the life of Burns doubles the interest of his poems, and I doubt whether the failings of his life have been much exaggerated. for contemporary testimony on that point is strong, though a high and excellent authority, Mr. Wallace, has recently taken the other side with much power and point. But the life of Burns which I love to read with his poems, does not consist in his vices; they lie outside it. It is a life of work, and truth, and tenderness. And though, like all lives, it has its light and shade, remember that we know it all, the worst as well as the best. His was a soul bathed in crystal; he hurried to avow everything. There was no reticence in him. The only obscure passage in his life is the love passage with Highland Mary, and as to that he was silent not from shame, but because it was a sealed and sacred episode. "What a flattering idea," he once wrote, "is a world to come! There shall I with speechless agony of rapture again recognize my lost, my ever dear Mary! whose bosom was fraught with truth, honour, constancy and love." But he had, as the French say, the defects of his qualities. His imagination was a supreme and celestial gift. But his imagination often led him wrong, and never more than with women. The chivalry that made Don Quixote see the heroic in all the common events of life made Burns (as his

brother tells us) see a goddess in every girl that he approached. Hence many love affairs, and some guilty ones ; but even these must be judged with reference to time and circumstance. This much it is certain, had he been devoid of genius they would not have attracted attention. It is Burns's pedestal that affords a target. And why, one may ask, is not the same measure meted out to Burns as to others ? The illegitimate children of great captains and statesmen and princes are treated as historical and ornamental incidents. They strut the scene of Shakespeare, and ruff it with the best. It is for the illegitimate children of Burns, though he and his wife cherished them as if born in wedlock, that the vials of wrath are reserved. Take two brilliant figures, both descended from Stuarts, who were alive during Burns's life. We occupy ourselves endlessly and severely with the offences of Burns. We heave an elegant sigh over the kindred lapses of Charles James Fox and Charles Edward Stuart. Again, it is quite clear that, though exceptionally sober in his earlier years, he drank too much in later life. But this, it must be remembered, was but an occasional condescendence to the vice and habit of the age. The gentry who pressed him to their houses, and who were all convivial, have much to answer for. His admirers who thronged to see him, and who could only conveniently sit with him in a tavern, are also responsible for this habit, so perilously attractive to men of genius. From the decorous Addison, and the brilliant Bolingbroke onward, the eighteenth century records hard drinking as the common incident of intellectual eminence. To a man who had shone supreme in the most glowing society, and who was now an exciseman in a country town, with a home that cannot have been very exhilarating, and with a nervous system highly strung, the temptation of the warm tavern, and the admiring circle there, may have almost been irresistible. Some attempt to say that his intemperance was exaggerated. I neither affirm nor deny. It was not as a sot he drank ; that no one insinuated ; if he succumbed it was to good fellowship. Remember, I do not seek to palliate or excuse, and, indeed, none will be turned to dissipation by Burns's example ; he paid too dearly for it. But I will say this, that it all seems infinitely little, infinitely remote. Why do we strain, at this distance, to discern this dim spot on the poet's mantle ? Shakespeare and Ben Johnson took their cool tankard at the Mermaid ; we cannot afford, in the strictest view of literary responsibility, to quarrel with them for that. When we consider Pitt and Goethe we do not concentrate our vision on Pitt's bottles of port or Goethe's bottles of Moselle. Then why, we ask, is there such a chasm between the Mermaid and the Globe, and why are the vintages of Wimbledon and Weimar so much more innocent than the simple punch bowl of Inveraray marble and its contents ? I should like to go a step further and affirm that we have something to be grateful for even in the weakness of men like Burns. Mankind is helped in its progress almost as much by the study of

imperfection as by the contemplation of perfection. Had we nothing before us in our futile and halting lives but saints and the ideal, we might well fail altogether. We grope blindly along the catacombs of the world, we climb the dark ladder of life, we feel our way to futurity, but we can scarcely see an inch around or before us. We stumble and falter and fall, our hands and knees are bruised sore, and we look up for light and guidance. Could we see nothing but distant, unapproachable impeccability, we might well sink prostrate in the hopelessness of emulation and the weariness of despair. Is it not then, when all seems blank and lightless and lifeless, when strength and courage flag, and when perfection seems as remote as a star, is it not then that imperfection helps us? When we see that the greatest and choicest images of God have had their weaknesses like ours, their temptations, their hour of darkness, their bloody sweat, are we not encouraged by their lapses and catastrophes to find energy for one more effort, one more struggle? Where they failed we feel it a less dishonour to fail; their errors and sorrows make, as it were, an easier ascent from infinite imperfection to infinite perfection. Man after all is not ripened by virtue alone. Were it so this world were a paradise of angels. No! Like the growth of the earth, he is the fruit of all the seasons; the accident of a thousand accidents, a living mystery moving through the seen to the unseen. He is sown in dishonor; he is matured under all the varieties of heat and cold; in mist and wrath, in snow and vapours, in the melancholy of autumn, in the torpor of winter, as well as in the rapture and fragrance of summer, or the balmy affluence of the spring—its breath, its sunshine, its dew. And at the end he is reaped—the product, not of one climate, but of all; not of good alone, but of evil; not of joy alone, but of sorrow—perhaps mellowed and ripened, perhaps stricken and withered and sour. How, then, shall we judge anyone? How, at any rate, shall we judge a giant—great in gifts and great in temptation; great in strength and great in weakness? Let us glory in his strength and be comforted in his weakness. And, when we thank heaven for the inestimable gift of Burns, we do not need to remember wherein he was imperfect, we cannot bring ourselves to regret that he was made of the same clay as ourselves.

No one was better fitted than Lord Rosebery to give voice to the universal feeling of Scotland, and the addresses here reprinted which he gave at Dumfries and Glasgow must be, and are, acknowledged by all to have been in every way worthy of the time and the theme. In them Lord Rosebery reached the summit of his oratorical career and added another to the many reasons for the place he has gained as the most popular Scotsman of his day.

(*Extract from The Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings.*)

LETTER OF THE HON. E. R. HOAR.

CONCORD, May 8, 1882.

MY DEAR DR. ELLIS : I find that it will be out of my power to attend the meeting of the Historical Society on Thursday next, and I am sorry to lose the opportunity of hearing the tributes which its members will pay to the memory of Mr. Emerson, than whose name none more worthy of honor is found on its roll. His place in literature, as poet, philosopher, seer, and thinker, will find much more adequate statement than any which I could offer. But there are two things which the proceedings of our society may appropriately record concerning him, one of them likely to be lost sight of in the lustre of his later and more famous achievements, and the other of a quality so evanescent as to be preserved only by contemporary evidence and tradition.

The first relates to his address in September, 1835, at the celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the settlement of Concord, which seems to me to contain the most complete and exquisite picture of the origin, history, and peculiar characteristics of a New England town that has ever been produced.

The second is his *power as an orator*, rare and peculiar, and in its way unequalled among other contemporaries. Many of us can recall instances of it, and there are several prominent in my recollection ; but perhaps the most striking was his address at the Burns centennial, in Boston, on the 25th of January, 1859.

The company that he addressed was a queer mixture. First, there were the Burns club ; grave, critical, and longheaded Scotchmen, jealous of the fame of their countryman, and doubtful of the capacity to appreciate him in men of other blood. There were the scholars and poets of Boston and its neighborhood, and professors and undergraduates from Harvard College. Then there were State and city officials, aldermen and common councilmen, brokers and bank directors, ministers and deacons, lawyers, and "carnal self-seekers" of every grade.

I have had the good fortune to hear many of the chief orators of our time, among them Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, Ogden Hoffman, S. S. Prentiss, William H. Seward, Charles Sumner, Wendell Phillips, George William Curtis, some of the great preachers, and Webster, Everett, Choate, and Winthrop at their best. But I never witnessed such an effect of speech upon men as Mr. Emerson apparently then attained. It reached at once to his own definition of eloquence—"a tak-

ing sovereign possession of the audience." He had uttered but a few sentences before he seemed to have welded together the whole mass of discordant material and lifted them to the same height of sympathy and passion. He excited them to smiles, to tears, to the wildest enthusiasm. His tribute to Burns is beautiful to read, perhaps the best which the occasion produced on either side of the ocean. But the clear articulation, the ringing emphasis, the musical modulation of tone and voice, the loftiness of bearing, and the radiance of his face, all made a part of the consummate charm. When he closed the company could hardly tolerate any other speaker, though good ones were to follow.

I am confident that every one who was present on that evening would agree with me as to the splendor of that eloquence.

Very truly yours,

E. R. HOAR.

REV. GEORGE E. ELLIS, D. D.,

Vice-President of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

SPEECH BY MR. RALPH WALDO EMERSON AT
THE BURNS CENTENARY, BOSTON, 1859.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN: I do not know by what untoward accident it has chanced—and I forbear to inquire—that, in this accomplished circle, it should fall to me, the worst Scotsman of all, to receive your commands, and at the latest hour, too, to respond to the sentiment just offered, and which indeed makes the occasion. But I am told there is no appeal, and I must trust to the inspiration of the theme to make a fitness which does not otherwise exist.

Yet, sir, I heartily feel the singular claims of the occasion. At the first announcement, from I know not whence, that the 25th of January was the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, a sudden consent warmed the great English race, in all its kingdoms, colonies, and states, all over the world, to keep the festival.

We are here to hold our parliament with love and poesy, as men were wont to do in the middle ages. Those famous parliaments might or might not have had more stateliness, and better singers than we—though that is yet to be known—but they could not have better reason.

I can only explain this singular unanimity in a race which rarely acts together, but rather after their watchword, each for himself—by the fact that Robert Burns, the poet of the middle class, represents in the mind of men to-day that great uprising of the middle class against the armed and privileged minorities—that uprising which worked politically in the American and French Revolutions, and which, not in governments so much as in education and in social order, has changed the face of the world.

In order for this destiny, his birth, breeding, and fortune were low. His organic sentiment was absolute independence, and resting, as it should, on a life of labor. No man existed who could look down on him. They that looked into his eyes saw that they might look down the sky as easily. His muse and teaching was common sense, joyful, aggressive, irresistible.

Not Latimer, not Luther, struck more telling blows against false theology than did this brave singer. The "Confession of Augsburg," the "Declaration of Independence," the French "Rights of Man," and the "Marseillaise" are not more weighty documents in the history of freedom than the songs of Burns. His satire has lost none of its edge. His musical arrows yet sing through the air.

He is so substantially a reformer, that I find his grand plain sense in close chain with the greatest masters—Rabelais, Shakespeare in comedy, Cervantes, Butler, and Burns. If I should add another name, I find it only in a living countryman of Burns. He is an exceptional genius. The people who care nothing for literature and poetry care for Burns. It was in-

different—they thought who saw him—whether he wrote verse or not; he could have done anything else as well.

Yet how true a poet is he! And the poet, too, of poor men, of hoddin-gray, and the Guernsey coat, and the blouse. He has given voice to all the experiences of common life; he has endeared the farm-house and cottage, patches and poverty, beans and barley; ale, the poor man's wine; hardship, the fear of debt, the dear society of weans and wife, of brothers and sisters, proud of each other, knowing so few, and finding amends for want and obscurity in books and thought. What a love of nature! and, shall I say it, of middle class nature. Not great, like Goethe, in the stars, or like Byron on the ocean, or Moore in the luxurious East, but in the homely landscape which the poor see around them—bleak leagues of pasture and stubble, ice, and sleet, and rain, and snow-choked brooks; birds, hares, field-mice, thistles, and heather, which he daily knew. How many "Bonny Doons," and "John Anderson my joes," and "Auld Lang Syne," all around the earth, have his verses been applied to! And his love songs still woo and melt the youths and maids; the farm work, the country holiday, the fishing cobbles, are still his debtors to-day.

And, as he was thus the poet of the poor, anxious, cheerful, working humanity, so had he the language of low life. He grew up in a rural district, speaking a *patois* unintelligible to all but natives, and he has made that Lowland Scotch a Doric dialect of fame. It is the only example in history of a language made classic by the genius of a single man. But more than this. He had that secret of genius to draw from the bottom of society the strength of its speech, and astonish the ears of the polite with these artless words, better than art, and filtered of all offence through his beauty. It seemed odious to Luther that the devil should have all the best tunes; he would bring them into the churches; and Burns knew how to take from fairs and gypsies, blacksmiths and drovers, the speech of the market and street, and clothe it with melody.

But I am detaining you too long. The memory of Burns—I am afraid heaven and earth have taken too good care of it, to leave us anything to say. The west winds are murmuring it. Open the windows behind you, and hearken for the incoming tide, what the waves say of it. The doves perching always on the eaves of the Stone Chapel opposite, may know something about it. Every name in broad Scotland keeps his fame bright. The memory of Burns—every man's and boy's, and girl's head carries snatches of his songs, and can say them by heart, and, what is strangest of all, never learned them from a book, but from mouth to mouth. The wind whispers them, the birds whistle them, the corn, barley, and bulrushes hoarsely rustle them; nay, the music-boxes at Geneva are framed and toothed to play them; the hand-organs of the Savoyards in all cities repeat them, and the chimes of bells ring them in the spires. They are the property and the solace of mankind.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE BURNS MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION, AT BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 28, 1901, BY HON. GEORGE F. HOAR.

You would not have bidden me here to-night, at any rate you would not have done well to bid me here to-night if you had thought I should try to say much that is original. Robert Burns is perhaps the best known character in history or literature. If we do not say, as Emerson did, that the pigeons on the eaves of King's Chapel know something about him, yet certainly there is no man, woman or child where the Scotch or the English tongue is spoken, the round world over, to whom the tones of Burns do not seem familiar as his mother's voice. When Scotsmen meet on his birthday they meet as children meet at a Thanksgiving table, only to recall old memories, to think again old thoughts, and to utter common words. If I have no title to speak of Burns as a Scotsman to Scotsmen, I have at least the touch of that nature which, whenever men are thinking of him, makes the whole world kin.

There is no doubt that Robert Burns is the hero of Scotland. Wherever on the face of the earth there is a Scotsman, and they are everywhere on the face of the earth, that name will quicken his pulse as no other will even if it be the Bruce or Wallace or Walter Scott.

Now surely it is no slight thing to be the hero of the Scotsman's heart. The Scottish is one of the great races. I do not know that it has or ever has had a superior. Wherever you find a Scotsman, whether on land or sea, whether in peace or in battle, whether in business or on the farm, in public life or in family life, on the frontier or in the crowded city, whether governing subject races in the East or a freeman among freemen in republican liberty, whether governing empires or managing great business institutions, sometimes harder to govern than empires, thinking or acting, discoursing of metaphysics or theology or law or science, writing prose or writing poetry, there you may hope to find a born leader of men sitting on the foremost seat and, whatever may be the undertaking, conducting it to success.

We Yankees do not undervalue ourselves. We lay claim also to the quality I have just described. I think that I, a born New Englander, esteem the New England character even more highly than do most New Englanders. I like to believe that these two peoples resemble each other in mental quality, as their rocky mountains and their rocky shores are like each other, and as, in general, they have had in common the same stern Calvinistic faith. I never feel more at home than when I am reading the novels of the great magician or the collections

of Scotch humor by Dean Ramsay. Dominie Sampson must have been the grandfather of Parson Wilbur. Baillie Nicol Jarvie was surely born in old Concord. The Scotch Elder and the New England Deacon are twin brothers. Both are good men, Godward, and if sometimes "a little twistical manward," it is much more rarely than is commonly supposed. If either of them love to get money, he knows how to give it away. If the Scotchmen, like their Yankee cousins, think it a shame to live poor if they can honestly help it, they have at least given one noble example of a man who thinks it a disgrace to die rich. What a great English writer says of the Scotch would answer for the New England Puritan and Revolutionary Fathers. "Every Scotsman," says Charles Reade, "is an iceberg with a volcano underneath. Thaw the Scotch ice and you will come to the Scotch fire."

So Robert Burns, sprung of a great race, will always have at least two great races for his loving audience.

He was fortunate also in a fit parentage for a great manhood and a great poet. His mother knew by heart the ancient lyrics, many of them never written or printed, of the mountain and the moor. They were the cradle hymns of the child. His father was a Scotch Puritan. Upon the plain gray stone in the churchyard at Ayr the poet carved the undying lines :

" O ye whose cheek the tear of pity stains,
Draw near with pious rev'rence, and attend :
Here lie the loving husband's dear remains
The tender father, and the generous friend ;

" The pitying heart that felt for human woe ;
The dauntless heart that feared no human pride ;
The friend of man—to vice alone a foe ;
For ev'n his failings lean'd to virtue's side."

This epitaph has one fault. The poet has borrowed for it one of the best lines of one of the greatest English poets. Surely no other man ever lived of whom it could be said in criticism that instead of taking a line from Goldsmith, he might have given us a better one of his own.

Now what was this man whose fame circles the earth like a parallel of latitude, whose words are known by heart to countless millions of men and are to be known by heart, as we believe, to countless generations? He was the child of two peasants, native of a bleak northern clime. He was born in a clay cottage roofed with straw, which his father had built with his own hands. Just after he was born, part of the dwelling gave way in a storm, and mother and child were carried at midnight to a neighbor's house for shelter. He got a little teaching from his father at night, by the light of the solitary cottage candle, and a little at a Parish school. But Carlyle tells us that poverty sunk his whole family below the level even of their cheap school system. He was born and bred in poverty in a sense in which poverty has always been unknown in New

England. Among our ancestors the hardships of the humblest life were but like the hardships of camping out of a hunting party or an army on a difficult march serving only to stimulate and strengthen the rugged moral nature. It was like practising in a gymnasium. The man came out of them cheerful and brave, with a quality fitted for the loftiest employment. Campbell tells us Burns was the eldest of a family buffeting with misfortunes, toiling beyond their strength and living without the support of animal food. At thirteen he threshed in the barn, and at fifteen was the principal laborer on the farm. Wearied with the toils of the day, he sank in the evening into dejection of spirits and dull headaches, the joint result of anxiety, low diet and fatigue. He saw his father broken by age and misfortunes approaching to that period when, to use the words of the son, "he escaped a prison only by sinking into the grave."

This kind of life—"the cheerless gloom of a hermit and the toil of a galley slave brought him to his sixteenth year, when love made him a poet." His first love, it is said, was his fellow reaper in the same harvest field. He has given an immortality to all his humble goddesses that no royal champion ever gave to high-born beauty. His Mary still looks down from heaven on all lovers. The star that rose on the anniversary of her death has received a new splendor from his muse. No Italian sky, no Arcadian landscape ever smiled with—

"a gleam,
A light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration and the poet's dream,"

like that which his genius has spread over the scene where the two young lovers met to pass a single day.

Walter Scott tells us that Burns looked forward, the great part of his life, to ending his days as a licensed beggar, like Andrew Gemmels or Edie Ochiltree. Yet this man brought to the world the best message ever brought to the world since Bethlehem, of love and hope and reverence for God and man. Humanity the round world over walks more erect for what Robert Burns said and sung. The meanest flower that grows has an added beauty and an added fragrance because of the song of Burns. The humblest task to which man can turn his hand has an added dignity because of him. The peasant loves his wife, and the mother loves her child, the son loves his father better because of the living words in which Burns has clothed the undying affections of the human heart. He has taught us as no other man has taught us, as was never taught us outside of the Holy Scriptures, the beauty and the glory of the worship of the soul to its Creator. The whole secret of Scottish history, the whole secret of New England history, is told in the Cotter's Saturday Night:



JEAN ARMOUR BURNS BROWN,
GRANDDAUGHTER OF ROBERT BURNS' OLDEST SON.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
 They round the ingle form a circle wide;
 The sire turns o'er wi' patriarchal grace,
 The big ha' Bible, ance his father's pride;
 His bonnet reverently is laid aside,
 His lyart haffets wearing thin an' bare;
 Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
 He wales a portion with judicious care;
 And, "Let us worship God!" he says with solemn air

Then, kneeling down, to heaven's Eternal King,
 The saint, the father, and the husband prays;
 Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing";
 That thus they all shall meet in future days;
 There ever bask in uncreated rays,
 No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear;
 Together hymning their Creator's praise,
 In such society, yet still more dear;
 While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,
 In all the pomp of method and of art,
 When men display to congregations wide
 Devotion's every grace, except the heart!
 The Power, incensed, the pageant will desert,
 The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
 But happy in some cottage far apart,
 May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul,
 And in his book of life the inmates poor enroll.

"From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs."

From scenes like these New England's grandeur springs.
 The spirit of the Scotch Covenanter and the New England
 Puritan, the spirit that breathed in the prayer that rose from
 clay cottage, and from mossy hillside, which make—

"In fair Virtue's heavenly road,
 The cottage leave the palace far behind;

the spirit which consoled Wallace on the scaffold and encountered Edward at Bannockburn—we, too, know something about it. It crossed the sea with our Fathers. It landed with them at Plymouth and Salem. It stood, that April morning, on the green at Lexington, and at the bridge at Concord. It drove sir William Howe, with his regiments and ships out of Boston. It captured Burgoyne at Saratoga. It sustained Washington at Valley Forge. It triumphed with Washington at Yorktown. It abolished slavery. It saved the Union. It triumphed again at Appomattox. It was the spirit of God-fearing, law-abiding Liberty, loving home, dying if need be for country. Certainly New England may claim the right to stand by Scotland when she honors the memory of Burns.

No race or nation will ever be great, or will long maintain greatness, unless it hold fast to the faith in a living God, in a beneficent Providence, and in a personal immortality. To man as to nation every gift of noblest origin is breathed upon by this hope's perpetual breath. I am not here to make an argument. I only affirm a fact. Where this faith lives are

found Courage, Manhood, Power. When this faith dies, Courage, Manhood and Power die with it.

No poet can be great, whatever his genius, unless he have in his native language a fit instrument. But few languages have ever been spoken among men, so far as we know, in which the genius of a poet would not have found itself hampered and fast bound, as the soul of Shakespere would have found itself constrained and dwarfed in the body of a brute. The lyre of the minstrel must be musical in tone. There are the Greek and the Latin and the Italian and the Spanish and the English. Among these languages the Lowland Scotch is without a superior, if not without a rival, for the utterance of what Robert Burns had to say to mankind. There was never language spoken under Heaven among men fitter vehicle of the tenderest pathos, of the loftiest poetic emotion, of the pithiest wit or wisdom, of the most exquisite humor than the Lowland Scotch. David might have written his Psalms in it and Solomon his Proverbs, and Æsop his fables, and Cervantes his immortal story, and Franklin his sage and homely counsel. If any man doubt what I say, let him get The Psalms frae Hebrew intil Scottis, by P. Hatley Waddell, LL. D., Minister, and read how King David might have spoken if he had been inspired to speak for Scotsmen and not for Jews.

Before we come to what we may call the quality of the soul of Burns, let me speak of one or two gifts with which nature endowed him which were essential to his greatness as a poet. He had the gift of tunefulness. He said the things he had to say so that you hum them like a tune. It is not enough that a sentiment be noble and true, that it be witty or wise, to move the heart and stir the pulse. It must be rhythmic in expression. This explains why it is that translations are seldom worth anything. You may translate the thought into another tongue. But you cannot translate the music. Throughout all nature the soul needs this influence of rhythm, if it is to be powerfully moved. The ship above the water is doubled in rhyme by the shadow below—the rhythm of oar-stroke with oar-stroke, the cadence of the incoming tide, the reflection of star-lit sky in star-lit lake—this secret of rhythm, what it is, why it so penetrates and subdues the soul, nobody knows. Substitute for one word in a line of “*Lycidas*” or in the “*Cotter’s Saturday Night*” another that means precisely the same thing to the intellect, and the poetry is all gone. The genius of Scotland sings through the soul of Burns like the wind through an Æolian harp. His thoughts seem to come to us on the wings of melodies prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

Burns had the gift of humor. A famous English wit said it would take a surgical instrument to get a joke into the head of a Scotchman; to which a famous Frenchman well answered: “True, an English joke.” Certainly Sidney Smith must have

been joking himself when he denied the sense of humor to the nation that produced Burns, Walter Scott, John Brown, John Wilson and Dean Ramsay. I, myself, know many delightful, wise and witty Englishmen. I know well the contribution which the English race, to which I belong, has made to humor, from Chaucer, the morning star of poetry; through Shakespere down to Sidney Smith himself. But for all that, these stars dwell apart. I am afraid the rays of their humor do not shine for their countrymen in general. If there be one man rather than another who cannot take a joke, and into whose serious and solemn conception of things not the slightest humor ever enters, it is the average Englishman.

There is a book in two volumes by a Mr. Adams, entitled "Wrecked Lives." He includes Robert Burns in his list. We all know the sorrow and the sin and the remorse with which the life of this peasant boy—and he was always a boy—was so full. But for all that I think most of us would have liked to be on that wreck. Do not be too sure, my sanctimonious friend, that the life of Robert Burns was a sad one. God gave him of His choicest blessings. He gave him humor, that most delightful solace and comfort ever given to man, as a great humorist has said, "to enliven the days of his pilgrimage and to charm his pained footsteps over the burning marle." With it He gave him what He always gives with it, a tender and pitying heart, where dwelt together like twin springs the fountain of laughter and the fountain of tears. Burns had a humor that could make fun of Satan himself, and a kindly humanity that could pity him. God gave him the love of common things, the love of flowers and of birds, the love of home, and the love of father and mother and woman and child, the love of country, and above all a country worth his love. God gave him the company of his own thoughts. Did the poems that have brought such good cheer to all humanity bring no cheer to their author? Do you think that when those immortal children were born there was no lofty joy of fatherhood? If ever poet knew the heart of poet, Wordsworth knew the heart of Burns. It was no figure of sorrow or despair that appeared to that sure and divine vision, but the figure of one—

in glory and in joy
Following his plow upon the mountain side.

If to man of woman born was ever given, not one, but a thousand glorious hours of crowded life, each worth an age without a name, they were given to him. "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled" was composed by Burns on horseback in the night in a terrible storm when he was drenched to the skin. With what days of toil, with what nights of sleeplessness, with what hunger and thirst, with what scorn of men and women, with what nakedness and rags would you or I buy the immortal ecstasy of that ride in the storm when "Scots

wha hae " burst upon his intellectual vision? The peasant was in good company that night when the Bruce rode behind the horseman. With what travail and toil would we buy the privilege for a week or a day or an hour to think the thoughts of Burns? Do you think that there was no rapture, that there was no sweet consolation and comfort when the light of the star that shone over Mary's grave burst upon him in the silence of his prayers, as the planets break out upon the twilight?

I suppose this plowman of ours had many a carouse which left its unhappy trace upon brain and body. But on that night of more than royal fun when the hours—

" like bees laden with pleasure "

flew by Tam O'Shanter, Burns was with him. There was no headache or heartache in the cup. When glorious Tam, through the window of Alloway's auld haunted kirk, saw the young witch, clad in little more than nature had given her, take her first lesson in that immortal dancing school, and called out " Weel done, cutty sark," Robin was peeping too. Perhaps it is all vain imagination. But I cannot help thinking that on that occasion at least the carnal mind comprehended the things that be of the spirit.

He was a noble lover, and he was a noble hater; and like that of all noble haters his hatred was born always of love. He loved God. He loved Scotland. He loved Scotsmen and Scotswomen, who made Scotland. He loved flowers and hills. He loved justice and he loved liberty. He loved humanity. He hated, and only hated, the things that were enemies of these. He hated self-righteousness. He hated arrogance. He hated pride of wealth and of rank. He hated cruelty. He hated tyranny. Self-righteousness, bigotry, cruelty, tyranny, the pride of rank and the pride of wealth, were the besetting sins not only of Scotland but of mankind at large in his day. They are not the besetting sins of Scotland or of mankind at large to-day; and that they are not is due to few men on this planet in larger degree than to Burns. He brought from heaven to man the message of the dignity of humanity, of brotherly love and justice and pity for sorrow and for sin. And while we lament as Burns lamented what was sorrowful and what was sinful in his own life, yet the very fact that his life had in it so much of poverty and of sorrow and of sin fitted him all the more to deliver that message to mankind, gave a new power to the lash with which he scourged pride and self-righteousness and bigotry and tyranny, and disposed men to harken and to give heed to that message which, perhaps, no other man could have so perfectly delivered. He spoke to poor men in the right of a man who was poor. He spoke to sinners in the right of a man who had sinned. He spoke to freemen in the right of a man who was free. From every line of Burns seems to come

the old lesson—What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

Not even the love of country for a moment quenched in the heart of Burns the still holier emotion—the love of Liberty. He was filled with the spirit of another great Scotsman, Fletcher of Saltoun, who said: "I would die to serve Scotland; but I would not do a base act to save her." He would never stand by even his own country in a wrong. He knew that the purest love of country is that which values her honor above her glory or her life. That most abominable and pernicious sentiment, "Our Country, right or wrong," found no home in his bosom. When the administration of Great Britain plunged his country into a war against what he thought the just rights of another people, he gave as a toast: "May our success in the present war be equal to the justice of our cause." When somebody proposed the health of Pitt, I think then the Prime Minister, he gave this: "Here is to the health of a better man, George Washington." Just after our Revolution he wrote an ode for General Washington's birthday, of which the first stanza is:

No Spartan tube, no Attic shell,
No lyre Æolian I awake,
'Tis Liberty's bold note I swell;
Thy harp, Columbia, let me take!
See gathering thousands, while I sing
A broken chain, exulting bring
And dash it in a tyrant's face,
And dare him to his very beard,
And tell him he no more is feared,
No more the despot of Columbia's race!
A tyrant's proudest insults braved.
They shout a People freed! They hail an Empire saved.

What has he not done for Scotland? I suppose that romantic story which Walter Scott tells so admirably in the *Tales of a Grandfather*—a book which should be in the hands of every ingenuous boy—the story of Wallace and the Bruce and Randolph and the good Lord James of Douglas, of Bannockburn, of Montrose, of Argyle, of Claverhouse, of Fifteen and of Forty-five, the genius of Campbell, of Allan Ramsay and Dr. John Brown would have made their way into the knowledge and, even without Burns or Scott, the heart of mankind. Yet, but for Burns, and one other, we should have known Scotland but as we know Wales or Denmark or Norway. I should be disloyal to the greatest single benefactor of my boyhood if I did not claim for Walter Scott a share in this achievement.

Aye me! Aye me! It is lang syne. It is threescore years and ten ago, almost, since I used to kneel with a book by a chair—I was not big enough for a table—to drink in with mouth and eyes wide open those wondrous stories in the *Tales of a Grandfather*—they did not let little boys read novels in those days—of Sterling Brig and the gallant exploits of Wallace and

his treacherous betrayal when Menteith turned the loaf, and his dauntless bearing at the trial, and his tragic death; of Randolph and the good Lord James of Douglas, who loved better to hear the lark sing than the mouse squeak; of the Bruce and his landing on the shore of Garrick; and the story of the spider that failed six times to swing himself to the beam, six times, and got there the seventh, which led King Robert in his cabin to remember that he had been beaten six times too, and might succeed the seventh, as the spider did; and the taking of Edinburg Castle by scaling the precipice; and the getting Douglas Castle back three times from the English; and Bannockburn, where the Scottish Army knelt in prayer and King Edward thought they were asking forgiveness; and the striking down of the English Knight Sir Henry De Bohun on the evening before the battle; and the death of Douglas in Spain; and his pilgrimage with the Bruce's heart, when the Spanish warriors wondered that so brave a warrior had no scar on his face, and he told them he thanked God that he had always enabled his hands to keep his face; and the casting of the Bruce's heart in its silver case into the Moorish ranks. "Pass thou first, thou dauntless heart, as thou wert wont of yore, and Douglas will follow thee or die"; and the finding the bones of Bruce five hundred years after, in a marble tomb in the church at Dunfermline; and the great concourse of people—"and as the church would not hold the numbers, they were allowed to pass through it one after another, that each one, the poorest as well as the richest, might see all that remained of the great King Robert who restored the Scottish Monarchy. Many people shed tears! for there was the wasted scull which once was the head that thought so wisely and boldly for his country's deliverance; and there was the dry bone which had once been the sturdy arm that killed Sir Henry De Bohun between the two armies, at a single blow, on the evening before the battle of Bannockburn"; and then afterward the story of the six Jameses and of the beautiful Mary and the fatal flight into England, and the scaffold at Fotheringay. Then later still, though yet a boy, I read the stories of Bothwell Brig and of Claverhouse—I was perfectly impartial between Cavalier and Roundhead—and of John, Duke of Argyle, who when Queen Caroline told him she would make a hunting ground of Scotland, answered: In that case, Madam, I must go down and get my hounds ready!" and of the death of Montrose on the scaffold who "climbed the lofty ladder as 'twere the path to Heaven."

These two immortal spirits, Scott and Burns, made this obscure country, smaller than an average American State, another Greece, and made of its capital another Athens, revealed to the world its romantic history, taught men the quality of its people, and associated their own names with every hill and rock and river and glen. They dwell forever in a mighty companionship, the eternal and presiding genii of the place.

Their spirits wrap the dusky mountain ;
 Their memories sparkle o'er the fountain ;
 The meanest rill, the mightiest river,
 Rolls mingling with their names forever.

The message Burns brought to mankind was something more than a message of liberty or democracy, or the equality of man in political rights. Those doctrines were rife already. Locke and Algernon Sidney and the men of the great Rebellion and the English Revolution had preached them. Our Fathers of the Revolution had given to the world their incomparable State papers. Samuel Adams and Jefferson had surrounded these doctrines with an impregnable fortress when Burns was an unknown plowboy. The theoretical doctrines of liberty were held by the great Whig Houses in England and Scotland. Russell and Sidney and Hampden had died for them. They were preached by men who would have regarded the contact of a peasant's garment with their own as contamination. Our own Revolutionary leaders had a high sense of personal dignity. The differences of rank, though not based on birth, were perfectly understood and rigorously enforced among them. But Burns revealed to mankind the dignity of humility. His heart went out to the poor peasant because of his poverty. He never doffed his bonnet in reverence to any man because of his accidents. He never seems to have had a taste for grandeur, whether physical or social. He was born and dwelt for a great part of his life in Ayr, on the seashore. His daily walk was in sight of that magnificent ocean view, fit to be compared, according to those who know them both, to the Bay of Naples itself. And yet he has not, so far as I now remember, left a line which indicates that he was moved by the grandeur and glory of the sea. The great sublimities which Homer and Milton and Shakespere picture and interpret to us were not for him.

The sublime objects of art or nature, "the cloud-rapt towers, the gorgeous palaces, the solemn temples," the everlasting sea, the mountain summits, the splendor of courts, the pride, pomp, and circumstances of glorious war, did not stir him to poetical utterance. The field mouse whose nest his furrow had laid bare, the daisy his plow had torn up by the roots, the cottage, the country ale-house, the humble thistle spreading wide among the bearded bear, the peasant and the peasant girl, the weans by the mother's knee, were the things dear to him. These were his inspirations. The strength of weakness, the wealth of poverty, the glory of humility are what he came into the world to teach mankind.

I cannot explain it. I do not know that I can describe it. I cannot reason about it. But I think you know what I mean when I say that we do not think of Burns as belonging to literature, but only as belonging to nature. I do not care about finding him in books of specimens of poets, or in collections of poets, or on the rows of bookshelves. He belongs somehow to

simple nature. I should rather almost be tempted to put his picture and include him in Bewick or Audubon among the song birds. You might almost expect a mocking-bird or a vesper sparrow, or a bobolink, or a hermit thrush to sing his music. Since he was born into the world you can hardly think of the world, certainly the world for the Scotsman, existing without him. You expect for him an eternity like that of nature herself. While the morning and the evening rejoice, while the brook murmurs, while the grass grows and water runs, while the lark sings and the bobolink carols and the daisy blossoms and the rose is fragrant, while the lily holds up its ivory chalice in the July morning, while the cardinal flower hangs out its red banner in August, while the heather blooms in Scotland or the barberry bush adorns the posture in New England, so long the songs of Burns shall forever dwell in the soul, "nestling," as Lowell says, "nestling in the ear because of their music, and in the heart because of their meaning."

THE 143d ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF
ROBERT BURNS WAS APPROPRIATELY CELE-
BRATED AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The celebration was held under the auspices of the Jean Armour Burns Club of this city. The edifice was crowded with the poet's admirers to the number of eight hundred.

Mr. William R. Smith, President of the Club, said:

After an interregnum of over twenty years, I find myself again occupying the president's chair of the Washington Burns Club. The old familiar faces no longer greet me; there are only a few left to tell the tale of our success in getting the great meetings to listen to the words spoken by those whom the nation delighted to honor her highest positions. Our martyred President Garfield's great speech has become a classic. Senator Frye, still honored with "supreme command" in the Senate, is living to testify as to the intelligent audiences of the more than 400 that drank in his words of wisdom. His speech brings a premium at the book stalls, necessitating its being reprinted, which this Club under its new name proposes to do, adding the essay of Mr. Andrew Carnegie from that great and rare book, "*Liber Scriptorum*," by special permission. Lord Rosebery's two great speeches, that of Ralph Waldo Emerson, and last, but not least, the address delivered in Tremont Temple by Hon. George F. Hoar, in March, 1901. These speeches, essays, and addresses are all calculated to help people to think aright about Robert Burns.

This Club, by changing its name to the "Jean Armour Burns Club," means to honor the devoted, loving wife, the kind, considerate mother of his children, the widow who honored his memory for thirty-eight years in a most acceptable manner. Ladies being members of the Club give a refinement to its proceedings not easily attainable by any other inspiring agency. To teach people to think aright about Burns is no easy task; it is time, we think, to drop the everlasting twaddle about his mistakes; let us look for, study, and try to appreciate his grandeur in all its various aspects.

Dean Stanley, one of the truly great men of the last century, in his lectures on the Scottish church, says: "Burns was the prodigal son of the Church of Scotland, but he was still her genuine offspring. I have already spoken of 'The Cotter's Saturday Night,' but this was not all. He who could pen the keen sarcasms of 'Holy Willie's Prayer,' and the address to the 'Unco Guid,' which pierce through the hollow cant and narrow pretensions of every church in Christendom, with a sword too trenchant, but hardly too severe, showed that he had not lived in vain in the atmosphere of the philosophic clergy and laity of the last century, whose kind and genial spirit saved

him from being driven by the extravagant pretensions of the popular Scottish religion into absolute unbelief."

Mr. Andrew Carnegie, in a speech in Dumfries, October 14, 1899, says: "Burns has become part of the national life of Scotland, and must endure as long. Scotland would not be Scotland, nor would her sons be what they are, if he had not appeared. Eliminate from us what that genius has influenced, stimulated, and nourished within us from childhood up, in our individual characters, and we cease to be Scotch. It is startling to think that we must say of one man that we cannot be truly national unless there be within us growth from the seed which he sowed; yet it is true, such the power of genius in its highest development. For another reason Burns occupies and will permanently hold his unique position in other lands than his own, for supreme genius rules over the highest natures of all lands. Its touch makes the whole world kin."

As long ago as 1844, Christopher North said: "Burns is among the highest order of human beings who have benefited their race by the expression of noble sentiments and glorious thoughts; has he not elevated honest rusticity, lightened the burden of care, aided to reconcile poverty to its lot, advanced the dignity of labor, placed a crown on the head of an honest man 'tho' e'er so poor,' and proclaimed him 'king o' man for a' that?'"

When visiting Scotland, after many years' absence, I had the good fortune to meet Mr. Craibe Angus, the great Burns bibliographer and collector—since passed to the unknown land, regretted by all who had the honor of his acquaintance. An extract from the introduction of his book (which he presented to me the 18th of August, 1899) will better describe the thorough Burns student he was than anything I could say about him: "Whatever be the reason for the larger circulation of Burns, the fact remains that he is more electrical, more up to date, more in the heart of the English-speaking people than any other poet. It is not in the name of Shakespeare, intellectually supreme though he be, or Milton, or Goldsmith, that English, Irish, and Scotch pledge friendship to each other in foreign lands. No; on such occasions the inspiration is Burns, and the alternating themes, 'A Man's a Man' and 'Auld Lang Syne.' Racial and traditional differences are forgotten when hand clasps hand and voice joins voice in rendering that most magical of anthems, 'Auld Lang Syne.' The works, in a word, that have the largest circulation among white men, are the Psalms of David and the songs of Burns, the Sermon on the Mount and the 'Cotter's Saturday Night.'" Craibe Angus' great work, to be published in future, will be of immense value in teaching people to think aright about the poet Burns.

Former Gov. Knott, of Kentucky, in a speech to the Washington Burns Club in 1876, concluded with this: "Mankind will never consent that Burns shall be monopolized by a single

nation. Humanity loves and claims him; vast as would be the chasm in the literature of his country, if the glorious offspring of his genius was stricken from it, vaster still would be the void in the universal heart of man if the wide space filled by the memory of Burns would be empty; a memory which will grow brighter until time itself shall wax old as doth a garment, and the heavens be rolled together as a scroll.

In introducing Mr. Henderson, Mr. Smith said it was a great pleasure to present a Scotchman who had reached the highest obtainable political position in this country, to speak for, in his opinion, the greatest Scotchman who ever lived.

Speaker Henderson's appearance on the rostrum was the signal for a most gratifying demonstration.

REMARKS OF SPEAKER HENDERSON BEFORE THE JEAN ARMOUR BURNS CLUB.

I do not know how you all felt, but do you know I had a kind of devouring feeling for Mrs. Latey when she sang those two beautiful Scotch songs, "On the Bonnie, Bonnie Banks of Loch Lomond," and "Coming Thro' the Rye." It all reminded me of my trip to Scotland last summer, which, after a lapse of many, many years—yes, I say many years, because I do not intend to be too specific about my age [laughter]—I found myself, like our worthy President, Mr. Smith, back in Scotland, in the land of my birth, and away up in the Highlands I heard sang there this sweet song of "Loch Lomond." And as the strains stole sweetly over that beautiful lake how it stirred the very blood in one's veins; how thrilling it was to look upon the face of that grand old mountain, Ben Lomond, and to hear the sweet song of the bonnie lassie, in our midst, twirling the notes of that sweet song of Loch Lomond. [Applause.]

But I received a tremendous shock here this evening. It all happened when I saw our worthy President addressing a lady, with what I thought was a little more ardour on Mr. Smith's part than he should exercise for one of his years. [Laughter.] I stepped forward, of course, to study him, and learned that the lady was the descendant of one of the worthiest and brainiest men that ever held a seat in Congress. Turning to me, this lady wanted to know if I were going to talk about Burns this evening. I told her I was. "O," she said, "what more can there be said about Burns?" This was quite a shock, and as I had made no preparation for my talk the task was a hard one, and this shock made it still harder, and I thought about suggesting an adjournment to our worthy President. [Laughter.] But I want to tell that good lady that there is much to be said about Burns. I want to say to that lady that in connection with the life of Burns there is a story for father

and mother, for the young and for the old. Do the dear things in life ever grow old? Are there no more tributes to be paid to the sainted father, and to that one person unequalled in earth, the mother? Suns and moons will come and go, and yet the story of the mother will be fresh, and new loves, new worships, and new kisses, will be bestowed upon that sainted person. Is the story of love worn out? Will not the story of love be told again and again while humanity lives on earth, and will it not ever be the same fresh, pure, thrilling story? Certainly we are not tired of hearing of the one great character of our native land—the land of our forefathers? No, my friends, you cannot go to-day to Edinburgh, or other cities and towns in Scotland, and see the monuments erected by our ancestors to the people's poet without feeling one's blood take fire with enthusiastic admiration.

Last summer while I was in Edinburgh the Lord Provost gave me a beautiful dinner, and I related at that dinner an event which occurred in our family upon the departure of my father and his family from Scotland. When my father left Scotland, together with mother and his brood of little children, all desired to visit old Holyrood. The sentinel who stood there then—and one stands there now—would not permit us to enter, because we were dressed as peasants. We had on "store clothes," so to speak, but my father wore a suit of corduroy, which in those days was called, I think, "mole-skin." [Laughter.] My brother and sister were allowed to pass the sentinel, but when along came my father with his ruddy, honest face, but also in corduroys, the bayonet was put down before him and he was told he could not enter Holyrood with those clothes on. My brother hearing the trouble said, "if Father can't go in then none of us will go in," and not one of the Henderson family entered old Holyrood that day. But fifty-five years thereafter his youngest child revisiting the land of his birth found that the King had sent an order before him directing that he be shown through every part of Holyrood. [Applause.] I related this incident at that dinner, and before that assembled body of leading men and lovely women who were entertaining me at Edinburgh last summer tears were my response, and how I wished that dear, old Tom Henderson could have been there to see what a change fifty-five years had wrought in his native land. For, although his ancestors had shed their blood in Scotland's cause on many a field, because he wore a corduroy suit he was not allowed to enter Holyrood, while, to-day, the humblest peasant can enter there, in the land where Burns sang his immortal songs, contributing potentially to the great change. So, my dear lady friend, something yet may be said about Burns, and although I had no prepared speech the lady's remark gave me a text for one, with these heads:

I will speak of Burns as a *Preacher, a Teacher, a Liberator,*

a Philosopher, and a Poet, and that is all my speech. [Laughter.] I start out with the bold declaration that Robert Burns was a great man, a great preacher. The small man don't need centuries to tell the world what he amounts to, and you can size the small man up quickly. But it can be truly said of the great man that "he is not without honor save in his own country." True, it may take years and even ages to tell the world he was great. Great men are as simple as the daisies you tread upon, and one of the attributes of greatness is simplicity. Greatness springs up amongst us as the wild rose, and while we feel its very presence we cannot possibly describe it. So it was with Burns. While he lived he was not fully appreciated. He was not fully appreciated in his own day and generation, and I can even remember when a copy of Burns was not allowed in the Henderson family. The character of Burns was not appreciated by the church, and if my friend, the Rev. Dr. MacLeod, had lived in those days, in the days of Burns, he would have had some doubts about the character of Robert Burns. It is different now, Doctor, because you have a different laity to deal with. You deal with a different class; you deal with a class of thinkers, with those who use their brains and who reason, a class who will talk about your sermons and who will reason about them. But my dear old father lived to see the poems of Robert Burns read almost daily in his family, and by him, too, almost as often as his own family Bible. My father lived to discover that Burns was a great man, and I say he was a great preacher. You cannot always select the pulpit for the preacher. Take my own case as an example. [Laughter.] Now, I was educated by my mother for the ministry; brought up for it, and I remember when often coming home from some hard campaigns in Iowa my dear old mother would come to me and in a soft voice would say: "David, if I could only see you in the pulpit; if I could only see you a minister?" "But," I would say in reply to her, "my dear mother, I am a preacher. The only trouble is that you cannot see and understand my pulpit." Robert Burns was also a preacher, a preacher to humanity, and I tell you my friends that if this old earth of ours had more such preachers in its pulpits, it would be a better world. [Applause.] Yes, but some say Burns drank. In regard to this I want to present to you two witnesses on this subject of drinking. You can understand from what I have already said about Father Henderson that he would make no unjust charges which would hurt either the church or the clergy or the pulpit, and yet from him I learned (not, however, until I grew to manhood, for he would not let me into the secret while a youth) that there was scarcely a minister who ever ascended the pulpit in Scotland who did not beforehand take something both strong and good. [Laughter.] And upon inquiry among the old men of Scotland last summer they sustained the facts of this story.

So you see it after all depends upon the point of sight from which you view the pulpit, especially when you want to do justice to your neighbor in a matter of this kind. But let me call another witness—one who has just passed to the sacred beyond, and one whom I met last summer for the first and last time in Skibo Castle, and who was the uncle of Mr. Carnegie—Mr. George Lauder. Talking about Burns one day, Mr. Lauder said: "He was a comparatively temperate man, attacked by a drunken lot of would-be aristocrats, who slighted him because he had fallen in with the politics of the young Republic of the United States." And the nephew of Mr. Lauder, Mr. Andrew Carnegie, said of Mr. Lauder: "He stood on the very picket line of the army of progress." I wish you all could have known Mr. George Lauder; a great stalwart man, refusing to bend under the weight of 87 years; gentle, noble, loving, intellectual. Oliver Goldsmith drew his picture when he wrote:

"As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

That witness, ladies and gentlemen, is, in my judgment, a sufficient defense of Robert Burns' character. It is true he disturbed some of the good people of his age by his "Address to the Unco Guid," and also by his merciless analysis of hypocrisy in his "Holy Willie's Prayer." But in doing this he was tearing the mask of hypocrisy from the face of cant and superstition. He sang in unwavering tones the song of Liberty of Conscience. He sounded the truth and lifted up the human soul.

I also said he was a teacher. How many among us when we were students have longed for good teachers, especially among the poets and writers. I have had many teachers among that class; sweet teachers, teachers that I loved and revered, but not one of them aroused the desire for study and investigation in my young breast as did the Poet Burns. He was my greatest teacher. He stirred up the mind. He gave life to his poems. He awakened the desire for knowledge. He made a man strive for the best. He taught the people to think for themselves, and I want to tell you that the close student of Burns has a better working education than he who has dug out, in a sort of artificial way, a sheepskin from either Oxford, Yale or Harvard.

I also referred to Burns as a liberator. Of course, most of you will get the idea of a liberator when you think of Wilberforce, Wendell Phillips, Charles Sumner, and the other good men who ran the underground railway during the dark days of this Republic. But whether he strikes the shackles from either human limb or human soul, such a man is indeed a liberator, and such a man was Burns. You know that next to my mother he made me a lover of human liberty. He gave me the idea,

and where do you suppose I got it? I got it from one of his poems in which he says :

“ Why was an independent wish
E’er planted in my mind ?”

I think this poem of Burns,—“ Man was Made to Mourn,”—the greatest, perhaps, of all his poems, and I will give you one verse of it :

“ If I’m designed yon lordling’s slave—
By nature’s law designed—
Why was an independent wish
E’er planted in my mind ?
If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty, or scorn ?
Or why has man the will and pow’r
To make his fellow mourn ?”

That was the poem which inspired me. That is the poem which, if placed alongside of every kingly throne on earth would prove a battering-ram, a fire-brand and a torch for human liberty. “ If I’m designed yon lordling’s slave.” If God made me to be trampled upon, why have I the desire to be unfettered and free? O, my friends, take home with you the lessons of this great liberator. There is all the philosophy of free government in that simple little poem, and in it the Scottish Bard wrote the Magna Charta of human liberty.

I also said that Burns was a philosopher and a poet. But why waste time in attempting to prove this, because I regard Burns as the most versatile poet that ever lived. Of course, I know I may be putting this in the superlative degree, especially when I remember listening to Mr. Bayard Taylor, when he said the world had only produced four great poets, namely, Tasso, Homer, Shakespeare and Schiller. That was quite a surprise to me. Tasso was a great poet, and he touches the heart strings, but deals almost wholly with war. Tasso appeals to the liberator. He rings all the changes on the religious heart and shows up the passions in his great epic of “Jerusalem Delivered.” But after you have read that, what more is there to be said about his versatility? No doubt Homer was well named by Mr. Taylor, but after you have read all of those heroic and bloody adventures there is very little in the Homeric story. He even sports with death, murder, plunder, and shows a picture of love, and may undoubtedly be said to dispute with Burns the palm for versatility, and rises to the very summit of imaginative poetry. Still, he cannot bring himself down to the simple and make you a worshipper of the little flower and the fleeing mouse like Burns did, in which he takes you through the valleys and over the lakes, and you worship the simplest things of the earth. Then, if you are a lover, take his “Highland Mary,” as a poem to reach the heart. In fact, there is no key in the human heart which has not been touched by the poetic hand of Robert Burns. The soldier has been strengthened by him for liberty’s battle. Burns is loved and sung by

all the fraternal organizations of the earth. Some say he could have been poet-laureate, and I thought I would call upon Mr. Smith to verify that statement, although I hardly think Burns could have been prevailed upon to accept such, because he was too true to the people and loved the lowly. He believed in giving the poor man a chance to make something and then to enable him to defend that something.

But there was one thing that I was struck with while in Scotland, and that was the Edinburgh monument to Sir Walter Scott. I have not the power to describe it, with its fountains, and its beautiful ornamentation. When I got to Glasgow there was another fine monument devoted to Scott, and nearby a simple structure erected to Burns. This is the situation in Scotland generally. This was too much for me and I ventured to ask a Scotchman how it was that there was such a vast difference between the monuments to Burns and those to Sir Walter Scott. "I canna tell you, Mr. Henderson," he replied. "Well," I said, "I have made up my mind about it. Sir Walter Scott was knighted, he was attached to the nobility, and the pockets of the rich opened abundantly to build monuments to one of their class; while the monuments to Burns were erected through the contributions of the hard-working people among his countrymen." And that was finally admitted to have been the key to it. Sir Walter Scott, indeed, was a great novelist and a fair poet. I have read his "Lady of the Lake" at campfires and upon other occasions until I knew it by heart, but my admiration for him, I admit, is not as great now as it was before I visited Scotland, saw Loch Kathrin, Ellen's Isle and the other places he describes in that poem. They did not come up to my expectation in my visit to my native land. But let me tell you that Robert Burns will some day have a monument erected to his memory here in Washington [Applause]. That grand little Scotchman, Mr. Andrew Carnegie, who stands to-day unparalleled in noble generosity, and equalled by none in past ages, has said to us: "Burns must have a monument in the City of Washington." This is one of the improvements I expect to live to see in Washington. But, my friends, that will not be Robert Burns' great monument. His monument already rises from the noble, liberty-loving hearts of all lands, in all the world.

Senator Edward W. Carmack, of Tennessee, who was to have addressed the Club, sent a letter of regret.

President Smith then said: Permit me to introduce the pastor of this church to speak of the religious character of Robert Burns and his excellent wife.

Dr. MacLeod then spoke as follows:

SPEECH OF THE REV. DONALD C. MacLEOD, D. D.,
BEFORE THE JEAN ARMOUR BURNS CLUB.

A prominent politician was once riding on a train when an Irish lady carrying a basket laden with heavy bundles took a seat immediately in front of him. When the conductor came round to secure the fares, he collected from the Irish woman, but passed by the politician without noticing him. Astonished she turned to her neighbor and inquired: "An how is it the conductor takes money from me, a poor Oirish lady, and takes none from ye that sames to be rich?" The politician (who was travelling on a pass) replied: "I am travelling on my good looks." She looked at him for a moment, and retorted: "Shure thin ye maist be nearin' the ind of your journey." If we can judge from the large and cultured audience present here this evening, the "Jean Armour Burns Club" is not nearing the end of its journey, but rather standing upon the threshold of a new era of unexampled prosperity. In all the history of the world there has been no time when woman's rights were so seriously considered and zealously guarded as to-day. This is the golden age in woman's history. The wealth and tenderness of sentiment awakened by the names of mother, wife, and sister, has led us to reflect upon a name that ought to be peculiarly precious to every admirer of Burns, and to the memory of which the past generations have not done the amplest justice. Our Club in its reorganization would continue as in the past to discharge its obligations to Robert Burns. Moreover, we would make amends for the shortcomings of the past. We would do our part in giving to the world a proper estimate of the life and character of his faithful and estimable wife; and to this end we have reorganized under the new name of "The Jean Armour Burns Club," of Washington, D. C. We would not obscure the halo of glory with which enthusiastic admirers surround the names of "Highland Mary," Clarinda and the other heroines immortalized by Burns' generous heart and radiant genius. But we would not see these exalted and glorified at the expense and sacrifice of one more entitled and worthy to share with him the triumphs of his genius.

The wanderings of Burns' affections were many and various. The stream of his love was too deep and full and rapid to be controlled in one channel, however large and unobstructed. The river of his love was in a state of constant freshet, overflowing all normal bounds. But there was one who occupied the sanctum sanctorum of his soul. She was the High Priestess of his affections. She exercised a dominant influence over his life. To her more than all other influences combined we are indebted for the priceless legacy he has bequeathed to the world, and this was none other than his "Bonnie Jean." His various other heroines were only wandering planets, straying into his

atmosphere, influencing him for a moment, and then passing out into the great unknown. Jean Armour was the centre of the sphere of his emotions, around which his life revolved with the fidelity and constancy of a planet revolving around her sun. Burns' transcendent sentiment for his Jean is beautifully and eloquently expressed in his immortal lines, written at a time when their relations had suffered a most violent rupture :

“ Though mountains rise and deserts roar,
And oceans roll between,
Yet dearer than my deathless soul,
I love my Bonnie Jean.”

With this inspired commentary of Jean's pre-eminent place in Burn's affection and esteem before us, and with our knowledge of her unwavering loyalty, unalloyed love and tireless self-sacrifice for him during his life ; her loyalty to his memory and family, and her beautiful and honorable widowhood of thirty-eight years, let us draw the mantle of charity and forgetfulness over her one mistake, that has so many mitigating circumstances, and realize that we cannot adequately honor the memory of Burns without teaching the people to think aright of his devoted wife, Jean Armour.

This evening the Hon. Mr. Henderson has paid a worthy tribute to the manhood and genius of Burns ; glorifying him as teacher, liberator, philosopher and preacher, as well as poet. We do well as Scotchmen and Americans to discharge our obligations to our own age as well as to future generations in such eloquent tribute in honor of the memory and exaltation of the virtues of one of the world's richest and noblest souls and greatest benefactors. I shall only crave your forbearance a moment longer to emphasize the religious phase of the life of this great *Immortal*. The attitude of some people toward their fellow men is represented by the man who is looking at the sun through a telescope of several thousand diameters and making an uproar because of the spots revealed, oblivious of the overwhelming fact that regardless of these spots he is filling the universe with his glorious light and heat ; or like the man who refuses to inhale the matchless fragrance of the rose because the botanist tells it rests in a bed of thorns. We do not claim perfection for Burns, this would not be human—and Burns was intensely human—but we do claim that with the weaknesses and shortcomings, without which he could not have been the product of his age, he was one of the most magnanimous souls, one of the most compassionate, humane, forbearing spirits, one of the most generous and loving hearts the world has ever known. And while he stung to the heart with his withering sarcasm the Hyper-Calvinistic Theology, and peculiarly hypocritical religious life of his time, yet we challenge carping critics to controvert when we say that in the truest sense of the term he was a truly and intensely religious man.

His conceptions of God and religion were far in advance of the ordinary sentiment of his country and time. His own simple testimonies are his invulnerable defense against so much unjust criticism. I will quote one simple testimony from a multitude of a similar character that might be cited :

“ The great Creator to revere
Must sure become the creature ;
But still the preaching cant forbear,
And ev’n the rigid feature ;
Yet ne’er with wits profane to range
Be complaisance extended ;
An Atheist’s laugh ’s a poor exchange
For Deity offended,

When ranting round in pleasure’s ring
Religion may be blinded ;
Or if she gie a random sting,
It may be little minded ;
But when on life we’re tempest driven,
A conscience but a canker—
A correspondence fixed with heaven
Is sure a noble anchor.”

While Burns may never be canonized as a saint, nor regarded as a pillar of Orthodoxy, these sublime religious sentiments, breathed forth from his soul with the impress of living sincerity, will ever mark him as one who has learned his lessons of religion from the simple unadulterated gospel of the Nazarene. If he cannot accept our creeds and systems of Theology, instead of condemning him, let us rejoice that he had faith to accept our Bible and our Christ.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 389 513 0

